

# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

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Presented in English By:-

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## CONTENTS

- (1) Dedication—Page: 3
- (2) Preface—Page: 4
- (3) Chapter 1: Baal Kand—Page: 9
- (4) Chapter 2: Ayodhya Kand—Page: 29
- (5) Chapter 3: Aranya Kand—Page: 49
- (6) Chapter 4: Kishkindha Kand—Page: 52
- (7) Chapter 5: Sundar Kand—Page: 54
- (8) Chapter 6: Lanka Kand—Page: 80
- (9) Chapter 7: Uttar Kand—Page: 117
- (10) Appendix—1.1: Author's Musings: Page: 302  
Appendix—1.2: Speed of Hanuman: Page: 304  
Appendix—1.3: Life Sketch of Goswami Tulsidas: Page: 308
- (11) Appendix—2: About the Author: Page: 319

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## DEDICATION

### To My Most Beloved Lord Ram

No creature is perfect; it's foolhardy to claim so. The best of paintings cannot replace the original; the best of words cannot express the original emotions and sentiments. Even the Lord was not satisfied by one flower or one butterfly—he went on endlessly evolving and designing newer forms. So, I have done my best, I have poured out my being in these books. Honestly, I am totally incompetent—it was the Lord who had done the actual writing and had moved my fingers as if they were merely an instrument in his divine hands. But nonetheless, it's a tribute to the Lord's glory that he does not take the credit himself, but bestows it to them whom he loves as his very own. And to be 'his very own' is indeed an unmatched honour. However, I still beg forgiveness for all omissions, commissions and transgressions on my part that I may have inadvertently made. It's the Lord's glories that I sing, rejoice in, write on and think of to the best of my ability. I hope my readers will also absorb the divine fragrance effusing from the flowers representing the Lord's books, enjoy the ambrosia pouring out of them and marvel at the Lord's stupendous glories.

I submit this effort at the Lord's holy feet, and finding no words to express my profound gratitude to him, I just wish to remain quiet, and let my silence do the speaking and praying on my behalf.

Finally, I pay my greatest obeisance to Hanuman, the enlightened devotee of Lord Ram, whom I regard as my Guru (a spiritual guide), without whose blessings this effort would not have borne fruit.

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia  
Author

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## PREFACE

Goswami Tulsidas' Kavitawali, as the name suggests, is a poetic composition called 'Kavitta' (कवित्त). The Kavitta is basically a type of Chhanda (छंद). There are 4 types of Chhandas in Kavitawali as follows:-

(i) Kavitta (कवित्त) — These are 8 line verses arranged in 'backwards-and-forwards' pattern, or a 'Z' pattern. The 1st line is a step ahead of the 2nd line; the 3rd line is in step with the 1st, the 4th in step with the 2nd and so on. The last word of every second line rhymes with each other. (For example see verse no. 1/8).

Since the number of Kavitta verses are in a majority, the book is called Kavitawali.

(ii) Sawaiya (सवैया) — These are 4 line verses, each line stacked one above the other, with the last word of all the lines rhyming (example verse no. 1/1).

(iii) Ghanaakshari (घनाक्षरी) — These verses have 6 lines arranged in a 'pillar' pattern i.e., the 5th and 6th lines form the broad base of the pillar and 1st to 4th lines represent the body of the pillar. For purposes of rhyming, the six lines are arranged in three pairs of two lines each. The lines of one pair rhyme, but no two pairs rhyme with each other (example verse no. 7/111).

(iv) Chappey (छपैया) — These are also 6 liners arranged one above the other, not like Ghanakshari but like Sawaiya, and rhyming pattern is like Ghanakshari (example verse no. 6/47).

The frequency of appearance of verses is in the decreasing order of Kavitta, Sawaiya, Ghanakshari and Chappey.

'Kavitawali' is the legendary story of Lord Ram that was written by saint-poet Goswami Tulsidas as part of his Trilogy on Lord Ram's life and time—popularly known as 'Ramayan'. The other two books in this Trilogy are Geetawali and the epic Ram Charit Manas. Each of the three books of the Trilogy is a masterpiece in itself. The other two books would also be made available by this author as soon as they are ready for publication.

'Kavitawali' narrates, as we have read above, the story of Lord Ram in a poetic style that is called 'Kavitta' in Hindi. It is basically fine and excellent poetry in one of its best forms, being written as it is in Tulsidas' unique style of narration that is

at once lucid, enchanting and captivating for the mind. He has employed all the skills and mastery of words that he is so famous for.

The probable reason of his writing Kavitawali (and for that matter Geetawali as well, besides, of course, the epic Ram Charit Manas) is perhaps he wished to narrate the excellent story of Lord Ram in from different angles and employing different styles of poetic composition so that the story as a whole becomes exceedingly enchanting, fascinating and beautiful as it could now be read and recited in various styles and tones to suit every mood and liking of the reader.

Further, it helped Tulsidas to describe many aspects of the story which could not be possibly highlighted sufficiently in one book alone due to various restrictions—such as for instance the restrictions imposed by the style selected for the composition, or the flow of the narration, or the limitations of pages—could be overcome in the next book.

So, Kavitawali helped Tulsidas to express himself better and more articulately because now he could focus his attention more to highlight in very expressive terms certain parts or aspects of the epic story as well as to fill in certain gaps that he couldn't probably do in the other two books of the Trilogy.

Kavitawali was composed was written roughly between Hindu Samvat 1631 and 1680 (corresponding to A.D. 1574-1623). The wonderful book has been divided into 7 chapters on the pattern of the epic Ram Charit Manas, but unlike it, the contents are remarkably different. A brief summary is as follows:-

- (a) Balkand — This chapter covers only two aspects of Ram's story viz., his early childhood playful activities and the bow breaking ceremony highlighted by Parashuram's anger.
- (b) Ayodhya Kand — The main topics covered here are Sri Ram's exile, the stunned villagers and wayside people en-route to Chitrakoot and their being enamoured at the beauty of Sri Ram, Sita and Laxman, concluding with a brief description of Sri Ram's sojourn at Chitrakoot.
- (c) Aranya Kand — This consists of a single verse describing Sri Ram's sojourn at Panchwati. There, he is asked by Sita to fetch the decoy golden skinned deer for her, and the verse concludes with Sri Ram pursuing it.
- (d) Kiskhinda Kand — Similarly, this chapter is also of one verse describing Hanuman's leap towards Lanka across the ocean.
- (e) Sundar Kand — This whole chapter is devoted to the magnificent valour and brave deeds of Hanuman in the burning of Lanka and bringing back the news of Sita. The description is very vivid and so detailed that if one were to close his eyes, the whole tumult on the streets of the city of Lanka could well be visualised on the screen of the closed eye-lids, as it were.
- (f) Lanka Kand — Again, the horrors of war have to come to the fore here, and splendidly narrated. The difference, however, from Ram Charit Manas is the fact that all the credit for the destruction of the demon army here (and the city in earlier chapter) has been accorded to Hanuman in Kavitawali, with even Laxman and others playing only a side role. This observation is substantiated by Sri Ram himself (see verse no. 6/40).

Another outstanding feature of Sundar and Lanka Kands is that it is in the 'present tense narrative'. It appears that Tulsidas had closed his eyes, saw the happenings on the screen of his mind, and went on writing what he saw. It must be remembered that the events took place thousands of years ago, and to use the 'present tense' shows that Tulsidas had that transcendental reach beyond time and space.

(g) Uttar Kand — This is an absolute divergence from Ram Charit Manas. In Kavitawali, the main theme is prayer and invoking Sri Ram's mercy and benevolence; no mention is made of Ram's coronation, rule etc., neither is there any question answer format of either Ram Charit Manas or the Upanishads.

If one wishes, this chapter can be totally extracted from Kavitawali and read as a separate entity, without affecting the story of Ram in any manner. So, one could split Kavitawali into two sections—the first dealing with Ram's story (chapters 1 to 6), and the second (chapter 7) dealing exclusively with hymns and prayers that resemble the Psalms of the Holy Bible. The only linking factor between these two sections is the poetic style of 'Kavitta' etc. that has been adopted by the poet Goswami Tulsidas to compose this book "Kavitawali".

The Prayers can be roughly classified into 3 main categories—(i) those offered to Sri Ram as a human incarnation of the Lord (verse 7/1-7/24, 7/111-114); (ii) those that extoll and worship his holy name, greatness, its benefits etc. (verse nos. 7/25-82, 7/89-96, 7/115-127, 7/178); and (iii) those offered to Lord Shiva (verse nos. 7/149-176, 7/181-183). There are scattered verses on Nirguna God (e.g., 7/126), and on Tulsidas' humility and Lord's benevolent mercy on him (e.g., 7/56-73). These verses are also very prayerful.

There are minor prayers to river Ganges (verse no. 7/145-147), Annapurna (7/148), Chitrakoot (7/141-143), Sita Vat (7/138-140) and Prayag (7/144).

Besides prayers, he has referred to devotee Prahalad to establish the event which led to Idol worship (7/128), contemporary events such as plague in Varanasi or Kashi (7/169) and its horrifying affects (7/170-176), wild fire in Chitrakoot (7/143), his tormenting by the pundits of Varanasi (7/165), the glory of Kashi (7/172, 181-182), good omens at Kashi, igniting hope (7/180), ill effects of Kaliyug (7/83-88, 7/97-109, 7/170-177, 182-183), his own suffering by the way of pain in his arms (7/166) etc.

Tulsidas' relationship with his Lord is succinctly encapsulated in a number of verses, for instance verse nos. 7/110, 7/126, 7/178. He has also referred to Lord Krishna (7/131-135) and—remarkable for an ardent devotee of Sri Ram who is said to have refused to bow his head before an image of Krishna if he did not leave his flute and hold a bow and arrow, at which, as the legend goes, Krishna obliged—the Uddhav Gita has been beautifully narrated (verse no. 7/134-135). Further, there are interspersed verses on general wisdom (e.g. verse no. 7/116-120, 179).

This, in brief, is the epitome called Kavitawali. According to some, the collection had only 177 verses, but Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha and Gita Press have both 183 verses. So, the latter collection is preferred by me. I have, as is my practice and style, tried faithfully to stick to the original text while translating, with clarifying phrases in brackets. I have resisted the inclination to fiddle, tweak or twist the text to make the translation florid, attractive, succulent and dramatic; it would be tantamount to foisting on the original. As a consequence, the rendering appears drab or a little bit odd at times.

It would be noted that Tulsidas has covered the entire Aranya Kand and Kiskindha Kand in a single verse each. What was he trying to convey? For my personal views on this, and many other interesting relevant matters, I have included an Appendix No. 1.1 which would convey my thoughts.

In similar vein, I have tried to mathematically arrive at the probable speed of Hanuman's flight to bring the Dronachal mountain as well as the time he might have taken to leap across the ocean. Interesting figures and deductions emerge once you put on your thinking cap on any topic. This subject is included in Appendix No. 1.2.

Appendix No. 1.3 has a brief life-sketch of Goswami Tulsidas, the author of the original text of Kavitawali.

The time spent in remembering the Lord is always beneficial and spiritually uplifting. Since writing and translating requires immense amount of concentration, thought and effort, the accompanying benefit becomes all the more distilled and provides a sense of contentment which only a farmer can realise on seeing his full granary. Besides, the text is churned, boiled, sizzled and scrambled in your mind, with your subconscious thoughts as the receptacle, and the resultant broth is then filtered down and percolates in your whole being. One feels the 'one-ness' with one's Lord; it appears that the prayers are not of Tulsidas but that of the writer or translator himself. And even those of the reader.

This euphoric, exhilarating and refreshingly uplifting feeling is to be experienced to be believed. And surely, *this* is the greatest reward for the effort. A dive in the ocean reveals a bewitching and bewildering world of fascinating aquatic life which is not imaginable from the surface. Likewise, a dive into Tulsidas' works opens a panoramic view of mysticism, spiritualism, philosophy, metaphysics, devotion, auspiciousness, righteousness, morality/ethics, and civics/politics—in fact every conceivable concept under the sun. But, as the aquatic life is all-encompassed by the surrounding water, so is Tulsidas' philosophy all drenched and soaked in the devotion for Sri Ram. He sings the Lord's glories:- 'Speaking to yourself in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord' (Bible, Ephsians, 5/18-19), '....for he is the Lord of lords and King of kings : and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful (Bible, Revelation 17/14)

I hope my dear readers will forgive me for my temerity, my audacious attempt to try to interpret the great saint's words in my own words which I am aware are both incompetent as well as totally inadequate to convey the meaning of the saint's words in a wholesome and truthful manner. But nevertheless, since my words are also meant to sing the divine glories of the Supreme Being in the form of Lord Ram, to say a small prayer to the Lord, their incompetence and inadequacies can be overlooked, and surely the Lord who loves me very dearly would smile at my childishness and forgive me for any errors of commission and omission that I may make due to my follies and shortcomings.

The point is, irrespective of its shortcomings and other inadequacies, the reader should enjoy the book as a token of his love for the Lord. Nectar is always nectar irrespective of the jar in which it is present!

A little bit of prayer to the "Lord of all of us" would not be out of context, and let me quote the Holy Bible while doing so—

'I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice (books) I might teach (reach) others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown (alien) tongue' (Bible, Corinthians, 1/14/9-11, 19).

'I am not capable of anything. If He graciously accepts me, if He mercifully and benevolently empowers my eyes to see His divine form which is most beautiful, enthralling and incomparable in my own Atma or my pure-self (which is pure consciousness), I shall then consider my self as most blessed, most privileged, most obliged, most thankful and most fulfilled' (Kathopanishad, 1/2/22).

But let us remember one point, and that is whatever has been written in this book are not a word of mine, 'My doctrine is not mine, but 'His' that sent me; if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine; for he that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh 'His' glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him' (Bible, Gospel of St. John, 7/17-18). 'The words

that I have spoken to you do not come from me. The father who remains in me does his work' (Gospel. St. John, 14/10), 'What I say, then, is what the father has told me to say' (Gospel. St. John, 12/50). What more can I say.

'Finally, bretheren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you' (The Bible-Corinthians 2/13/11). As for my own self, my beloved Lord Sri Ram is sure to smile at and accept my efforts as an offering by his child, no matter how humble and incompetent they are. And, *that* is my reward!

I must express my heart-felt thanks to Sri Somil Bharti of Vrindavan who has done the Roman Transliteration of the original Hindi verses of the text for me. Lord bless him.

Amen!

Date: Christmas, the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, 2015

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Kavitāvalī

Bālakāṇḍa

Lord Sri Ram's Birth

अवधेसके द्वारें सकारें गई सुत गोद कै भूपति लै निकसे ।  
अवलोकि हौं सोच बिमोचनको ठगि-सी रही, जे न ठगे धिक-से ।।  
तुलसी मन-रंजन रंजित-अंजन नैन सुखंजन-जातक-से ।  
सजनी ससिमैं समसील उभै नवनील सरोरुह-से बिकसे ।।१।।

1. avadhēsakē dvārēm sakārēm ga'ī suta gōda kai bhūpati lai nikasē.  
avalōki haum sōca bimōcanakō ṭhagi-sī rahī, jē na ṭhagē dhika-sē..  
tulasī mana-ranjana ranjita-anjana naina sukhanjana-jātaka-sē.  
sajanī sasimēm samasīla ubhai navanīla sarōruha-sē bikasē..1..

Verse no. 1/1—[One maid talks with her companion] :- 'I had gone early morning to the palace gate of Dasrath, the king of Ayodhya. Just then, the king came out with his son in his arms. I was absolutely charmed, completely fascinated and enthralled at the sight of that divine child who is the eliminator of all sorrows. Those people who are not enamoured by this divine child and not thrilled at his sight are contemptible; they are to be treated as being most unfortunate and cursed. The edges of the child's eye-lids were smeared with 'Anjan' (a black, oily medicated paste usually used as a charm to ward off evil spirits), and his eyes were as beauteous and gorgeous as that of the 'Khanjan' bird's chick. Oh dear! Those eyes looked as if two equally beautiful blue-tinged lotuses have blossomed on the face of the moon!' [Here, the face of child Ram is likened to the moon, and his two beautiful eyes to the two lotus flowers.]

पग नूपुर औ पहुँची करकंजनि मंजु बनी मनिमाल हिउँ ।  
नवनील कलेवर पीत झँगा झलकै पुलकै नृपु गोद लिउँ ।।  
अरबिंदु सो आननु रूप मरंदु अनंदित लोचन-भृंग पिउँ ।  
मनमो न बस्यौ अस बालकु जौ तुलसी जगमें फलु कौन जिउँ ।।२।।

2. paga nūpura au pahum̐cī karakanjani manju banī manimāla hi'ēm̐.  
navanīla kalēvara pīta jham̐gā jhalakai pulakai nrpu gōda li'ēm̐.  
arabindu sō ānanu rupa marandu anandita lōcana-bhr̐ṅga pi'ēm̐.  
manamō na basyau asa bālaku jaum̐ tulasī jagamēm̐ phalu kauna ji'ēm̐..2..

Verse no. 1/2—'That child (Lord Ram) had a 'Ghungharoo' in his feet (a small ornament worn around the ankle and having tiny bells which chime when the foot is moved), a bracelet around his wrist, and a beautiful necklace of gems around his neck. A yellow frock adorned his dark complexion of pristine beauty. The king was thrilled and immensely pleased in having him in his arms. The child's face was like a lotus, and its divine sight amply rewarded the eyes of those who watched him without letting their gaze move away just like the black bee drinking nectar from the lotus flower and feeling extremely contented and fulfilled.

तनकी दुति स्याम सरोरुह लोचन कंजकी मंजुलताई हरै ।  
अति सुंदर सोहत धूरि भरे छबि भूरि अनंगकी दूरि धरै ॥  
दमकै दैतियाँ दुति दामिनी-ज्यौं किलकै कल बाल-बिनोद करै ।  
अवधेसके बालक चारि सदा तुलसी-मन-मंदिरमें बिहरै ॥३॥

3. tanakī duti syāma sarōruha lōcana kanjakī manjulatā'ī haraim̐.  
ati sundara sōhata dhūri bharē chabi bhūri anaṅgakī dūri dharaim̐..  
damakaim̐ damtiyām̐ duti dāmini-jyauṁ kilakaim̐ kala bāla-binōda karaim̐.  
avadhēsakē bālaka cāri sadā tulasī-mana-mandiramēm̐ biharaim̐..3..

Verse no. 1/3— The complexion of his (child Ram's) body is like a blue-tinged lotus, and the eyes dulled the prettiness (loveliness, beauty or charm) of lotus in their comparison. He appears very pretty/lovely in spite of being covered in dust (because the child has been playing around in the ground of the palace), and the famed beautiful image of Kamdeo turns pale in comparison. His tiny teeth glitter and dazzle like lightening, and he playfully performs many child-like pranks with a giggle and mischief on his face. Tulsidas prays that all those four sons of King Dasrath of Ayodhya should reside for ever in his heart and mind.

### Child-hood Activities & Pranks of Lord Rāma

कबहूँ ससि मागत आरि करै कबहूँ प्रतिबिंब निहारि डरै ।  
कबहूँ करताल बजाइकै नाचत मातु सबै मन मोद भरै ॥  
कबहूँ रिसिआइ कहै हठिकै पुनि लेत सोई जेहि लागि अरै ।  
अवधेसके बालक चारि सदा तुलसी-मन-मंदिरमें बिहरै ॥४॥

4. kabahūm̐ sasi māgata āri karaim̐ kabahūm̐ pratibimba nihāri ḍaraim̐.  
kabahūm̐ karatāla bajā'ikai nācata mātu sabai mana mōda bharaim̐..  
kabahūm̐ risi'ā'i kahaim̐ haṭhikai puni lēta sō'ī jēhi lāgi araim̐.  
avadhēsakē bālaka cāri sadā tulasī-mana-mandiramēm̐ biharaim̐..4..

Verse no. 1/4—Sometimes child (Lord Sri) Ram becomes adamant to get the moon, sometimes he gets afraid at the his own shadow. At other times he claps his hands

joyously and dances in merriment, a sight at which all the mothers feel overwhelmed with joy (1).

Then there are times when he yearns for a particular object, not relenting and letting anyone rest till the time he gets it. Tulsidas prays that all the four brothers should reside in his heart for ever. [Tulsidas enjoys the playful childhood days of his beloved Lord Ram, and is so enthralled and captivated by the charms of the Lord's child-like behaviour that he wishes that these scenes are permanently etched in his memory for ever, and that he should remain lost in their thoughts for all times to come, for as long as he lives.] (2)

बर दंतकी पंगति कुंदकली अधराधर-पल्लव खोलनकी ।  
चपला चमकै घन बीच जगै छबि मोतिन माल अमोलनकी ।।  
घुँघुरारि लटै लटकै मुख ऊपर कुंडल लोल कपोलनकी ।  
नेवछावरि प्रान करै तुलसी बलि जाऊँ लला इन बोलनकी ।।5 ।।

5. bara dantakī paṅgati kundakalī adharādhara-pallava khōlanakī.  
capalā camakaim̐ ghana bīca jagaim̐ chabi mōtina mālā amōlanakī..  
ghum̐ghurāri laṭaim̐ laṭakaim̐ mukha ūpara kuṇḍala lōla kapōlanakī.  
nēvachāvari prāna karai tulasī bali jā'um̐ lalā ina bōlanakī..5..

Verse no. 1/5— The combined effect of the child Ram's row of white glistening teeth that resemble the Kunda-kalis (buds of a conical tiny flowers that are white in colour), the opening of his lips (as he smiles), and the necklace of priceless pearls that he is adorned with create an image similar to the dazzle of lightening in black clouds. [The child is dark complexioned like the dark rain-bearing clouds. The white teeth glisten inside the lips like lightening showing in the dark cloud, and the pearl necklace adds to or multiplies the shining effect.] Curly hairs are dangling on his face.

Tulsidas says, 'Oh Lalla! [It is an affectionate form of address for a child.] I am overwhelmed and offer to sacrifice my self at the pretty sight of your beautiful face that is adorned by the magnificent ear rings which dangle down to the cheeks, as well as at your enchanting child-like talk (i.e. at your child-like giggle, babble, lisping and banter).

पदकंजनि मंजु बनीं पनहीं धनुही सर पंकज-पानि लिएँ ।  
लरिका सँग खेलत डोलत हैं सरजू-तट चौहट हाट हिऐँ ।।  
तुलसी अस बालक-सों नहिं नेहु कहा जप जोग समाधि किएँ ।  
नर वे खर सूकर स्वान समान कहौ जगमें फलु कौन जिएँ ।।6 ।।

6. padakanjani manju banīm panahīm dhanuhīm sara paṅkaja-pāni li'ēm̐.  
larikā sam̐ga khēlata ḍōlata haim̐ sarajū-taṭa cauhaṭa hāṭa hi'ēm̐..  
tulasī asa bālaka-sōm̐ nahīm̐ nēhu kahā japa jōga samādhi ki'ēm̐.  
nara vē khara sūkara svāna samāna kahau jagamēm̐ phalu kauna ji'ēm̐..6..

Verse no. 1/6—Attractive shoes adorn his (the child Ram's) feet, a tiny bow and arrow is in his small hands, and accompanied by children (of his age), he playfully moves about either on the banks of the river Saryu or the market places of Ayodhya. Tulsidas says that if one cannot develop love and affection towards such children,

then what is the utility of doing Japa (reciting and repetition of the Mantras), practicing Yoga (meditation and concentration on the Pure-Self) or being in a state of Samadhi (a trance like state of consciousness when one is lost in deep contemplation)? Such people (who do all these exercises but cannot inculcate love and devotion for the Lord) are similar to donkeys, pigs and dogs. Say, of what use is their life (i.e. what fruit or benefit have they got from taking birth)<sup>1</sup>?

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This verse must be seen in the correct light and not misinterpreted as casting aspersions on or in any way demeaning to the institution or the system of doing Japa, Yoga or Samadhi. The main objective of these three latter exercises is to obtain spiritual liberation and deliverance, to find emancipation and salvation, to acquire tranquility and peace for the soul, to have access to the Supreme Being and find the Absolute Truth of existence in the form of the pure Consciousness. Such exercises require a lot of effort, they are time consuming, and strict laws and regulations must be followed rigidly to achieve success in them. A smallest deviation or carelessness makes the whole exercise go in vain.

Besides this, they require a follower to concentrate his mind and attention on something that is too abstract for an ordinary man, something that is not easily verifiable or seen—because the cosmic Consciousness, the pure ‘Self’, the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Atma or Soul on which one is required to focus one’s attention are abstract entities too difficult to grasp and understand. This conception is beyond the understanding of an ordinary man, and so when the objective is not clear the path too becomes hazardous and uncertain.

Therefore, the exercises of doing Japa, Yoga and Samadhi in order to attain the Supreme Being and find emancipation and salvation are limited to a few highly enlightened souls and to those who are well-versed in the intricacies of the metaphysical philosophy of the scriptures. Therefore there are too difficult for an ordinary man to access. On the contrary, having love and devotion for the Lord’s known form and his charming image which is like that of a pretty child one sees around him in this world makes the path leading to peace and happiness of the soul as well as its emancipation and salvation very easy and light on the mind and the senses. It is very easy to relate to something that we see and experience everyday in our lives around us than to attempting to focus our mind on something that we cannot even comprehend.

Therefore, Tulsidas advocates the easier path of having love and devotion for the human form of the Supreme Lord as Ram instead of following the path that is arduous and time consuming and uncertain of yielding tangible results.

When we read the Holy Bible we come across the following declaration of Jesus Christ in the *Gospel of St. Matthew*, 18/1-6—1: At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2: And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3: And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4: Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5: And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. 6: But whose shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

*Gospel of St. Mark*, 9/36-37—36: And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, 37: Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.]

सरजू बर तीरहिं तीर फिरैं रघुबीर सखा अरु बीर सबै ।  
धनुही कर तीर, निषंग कसैं कटि पीत दुकूल नवीन फबै ॥

तुलसी तेहि औसर लावनिता दस चारि नौ तीन इकीस सबै ।  
मति भारति पंगु भई जो निहारि बिचारि फिरी उपमा न पबै ॥७॥

7. sarajū bara tīrahīm tīra phiraim raghubīra sakhā aru bīra sabai.  
dhanuhīm kara tīra, niśaṅga kasēm kaṭi pīta dukūla navīna phabai..  
tulasī tēhi ausara lāvanitā dasa cāri nau tīna ikīsa sabai.  
mati bhārati paṅgu bhaī jō nihāri bicāri phirī upamā na pabai..7..

Verse no. 1/7— Lord Ram, his friends and brothers roam about playfully on the banks of river Saryu. His hands hold a small bow and arrow, the quiver is tied around his hip, and a new Pitambar (a yellow coloured seamless silk cloth wrapped around the body as an over-garment) adorns his body. Tulsidas says that Sri Sharda (the goddess of speech, wisdom, intellect; also known as Saraswati) could not find anything to compare with this beauty and enchanting image of the Lord though she searched for it in all the fourteen Bhuvans (the 14 worlds that constitute this creation), nine Khands (the nine divisions or parts into which these worlds have been divided), the three lokas (the 3 nearer worlds) and the twenty-one Brahmaands (universes). So she became frustrated (as she could not find anything as beauteous, as magnificent, as majestic and as fabulous as this image of Lord Ram in the whole of creation).

### Bow Breaking Ceremony

छोनीमेंके छोनीपति छाजै जिन्है छत्रछाया  
छोनी-छोनी छाए छिति आए निमिराजके ।  
प्रबल प्रचंड बरिबंड बर बेष बपु  
बरिबेकों बोले बैदेही बर काजके ॥  
बोले बंदी विरुद बजाइ बर बाजनेऊ  
बाजे-बाजे बीर बाहु धुनत समाजके ।  
तुलसी मुदित मन पुर नर-नारि जेते  
बार-बार हेरै मुख औध-मृगराजके ॥८॥

8. chōnīmēnkē chōnīpati chājai jinhai chatrachāyā  
chōnī-chōnī chā'ē chiti ā'ē nimirājakē.  
prabala pracaṇḍa baribaṇḍa bara bēśa bapu  
baribēkōm bōlē baidēhī bara kājakē..  
bōlē bandī viruda bajā'i bara bājanē'ū  
bājē-bājē bīra bāhu dhunata samājakē.  
tulasī mudita mana pura nara-nāri jētē  
bāra-bāra hēraim mukha audha-mrgarājakē..8..

Verse no. 1/8— Those great kings (emperors) who are entitled to have a decorated royal umbrella held over their heads (as a sign of their seniority and exalted stature in the hierarchy of kings and emperors) have come from all the corners of the earth to king Janak's place, and they have pitched their respective camps with all the pomp and pageantry. They are very strong and powerful, full of valour and bravery, and are radiant and pompous; their bodies and clothes effuse glamour and charm. All of them have been invited to try their hand (luck) at marrying Sita (through the bow-lifting competition). The best of royal bards (royal singers, called the 'Bandijans') sing the fame of their respective lords (kings and emperors), the musicians are playing their

instruments, and some warriors of that royal assembly enthusiastically beat (thump) their arms occasionally (in an outburst of excitement to indicate that they are ready for the challenge).

Tulsidas says that in such times, all the residents of Janakpur repeatedly watch the (bewitching beauty of the) face of Lord Ram, the lion of Ayodhya, and feel happy in their hearts (because they hope, and are convinced, that the ultimate glory of marrying Sita would be of Ram's).

सियकें स्वयंबर समाजु जहाँ राजनिको  
 राजनके राजा महाराजा जानै नाम को।  
 पवनु, पुरंदरु, कृसानु, भानु, धनु-से,  
 गुनके निधान रूपधाम सोमु कामु को।।  
 बान बलवान जातुधानप सरीखे सूर  
 जिन्हकें गुमान सदा सालिम संग्रामको।  
 तहाँ दसरत्थकें समत्थ नाथ तुलसीके  
 चपरि चढ़ायौ चापु चंद्रमाललामको।।१।।

9. siyakēm svayambara samāju jahām' rājanikō  
 rājanakē rājā mahārājā jānai nāma kō.  
 pavanu, purandaru, kṛṣānu, bhānu, dhanadu-sē,  
 gunakē nidhāna rūpadhāma sōmu kāmu kō..  
 bāna balavāna jātudhānapa sarīkhē sūra  
 jinhakēm gumāna sadā sālīma saṅgrāmakō.  
 tahām' dasarat'thakēm samat'tha nātha tulasikē  
 capari caṛhāyau cāpu candramālālāmakō..9..

Verse no. 1/9— At the place where the Swayambar of Sita (a competitive system where any person who could fulfill the pre-set conditions could marry the princess) was to be organized, there were many Emperors and King of kings amongst the august assembly, and it is not possible to know their names. [That is, so many of them have come from all the corners of the earth that it is not practically possible to know who is who.]

The assembled Royals were a magnificent sight to behold—all of them were handsome and smart, they presented a sight of opulence, regal splendour and radiance, they were all virtuous, exhibited grandeur and pompousness, and were comparable to the great Gods such as Vayu (God of Wind), Indra (King of Gods), Agni (Fire-God), Sun, and Kuber (God's treasurer) so much so that the Moon (regarded as the most beautiful celestial body by poets) and Kamdeo (God of love, passion, beauty and cupid) stood no chance (of being praised and recognised in comparison to the great kings and emperors who have come on the occasion). [The assembled princes and kings and emperors were so handsome and charming to look at that neither the Moon nor the Kamdeo-cupid, who have traditionally been regarded as metaphors for beauty and charm, of opulence and grandeur, stood any chance to win against them.]

Among them were highly acclaimed warriors such as Vanasur and Ravana, the king of demons, who were proud of their invincibility in the battlefield. In the same assembly, Tulsidas' able Lord Ram quickly and effortlessly lifted the bow of Lord Shiva who wears the moon in his lock of hairs on his head.

मयनमहनु पुरदहनु गहन जानि  
 आनिकै सबैको सारु धनुष गढ़ायो है।  
 जनकसदसि जेते भले-भले भूमिपाल  
 किये बलहीन, बलु आपनो बढ़ायो है॥  
 कुलिस-कठोर कूर्मपीठें कठिन अति  
 हठि न पिनाकु काहूँ चपरि चढ़ायो है।  
 तुलसी सो रामके सरोज-पानि परसत ही  
 दृष्ट्यौ मानो बारे ते पुरारि ही पढ़ायो है॥10॥

10. mayanamahanu puradahanu gahana jāni  
 ānikai sabaikō sāru dhanuśa gaṛhāyō hai.  
 janakasadasī jētē bhalē-bhalē bhūmipāla  
 kiyē balahīna, balu āpanō baṛhāyō hai..  
 kulisa-kaṭhōra kūrmapīṭhatēm kaṭhina ati  
 haṭhi na pināku kāhūṁ capari caṛhāyō hai.  
 tulasī sō rāmakē sarōja-pāni parasata hī  
 ṭūṭyau mānō bārē tē purāri hī paṛhāyō hai..10..

Verse no. 1/10—Lord Shiva had made this Bow out of the hardest and the strongest material because he had to use it to slay the demon Tripura<sup>1</sup> and crush the pride of Kamdev (1).

That Bow had vanquished and trounced the strength of all the assembled princes, and as a result, had added to its inherent strength (2).

No prince could raise and string the Bow which was stronger than Vajra (the bolt of lightening used as a weapon by God King Indra) and harder than the shell of tortoise (3).

Tulsidas says that the same Bow broke when it came in contact with Ram's hands as if it had been instructed by Lord Shiva to do so (i.e. break in Ram's hands without any effort; to break voluntarily so that the Lord does not have to make any effort) (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>See note of Uttar Kand, verse no. 149.]

डिगति उर्वि अति गुर्वि सर्ब पब्बै समुद्र-सर।  
 ब्याल बधिर तेहि काल, बिकल दिगपाल चराचर॥  
 दिग्गयंद लखरत परत दसकंधु मुख्र भर।  
 सुर-बिमान हिमभानु भानु संघटत परस्पर॥  
 चौके बिरंचि संकर सहित, कोलु कमटु अहि कलमल्यौ।  
 ब्रह्मंड खंड कियो चंड धुनि जबहिं राम सिवधनु दल्यौ॥11॥

11. ḍigati urvi ati gurvi sarba pabbai samudra-sara.  
 byāla badhira tēhi kāla, bikala digapāla carācara..  
 diggayanda larakharata parata dasakandhu mukkhā bhara.  
 sura-bimāna himabhānu bhānu saṅghaṭata paraspara..  
 cauṅkē biran̄ci saṅkara sahita, kōlu kamaṭhu ahi kalamalyau.  
 brahmaṇḍa khaṇḍa kiyō caṇḍa dhuni jabahim̄ rāma sivadhanu dalyau..11..

Verse no. 1/11—At the time when Lord Ram broke the great Bow of Lord Shiva, its terrible thunderous and reverberating sound pierced through the Universe. Its impact caused the exceptionally heavy earth, along with its mountains, oceans and lakes, to shake and tremble; the snakes became deaf; all the animate world along with Indra and other Gods became extremely scared and very agitated; even those who were most fearless, bold and courageous began to falter and tremble; Ravana stumbled and fell on his face; the vehicles of Gods, the Moon and the Sun began colliding with each other in the sky; Shiva and Brahma became alarmed and stunned; and Lords Varaaha (the Boar), Kachap (the Tortoise) and Sheshnath (the legendary serpent, the Boa) wriggled and writhed in the ensuing tumult and agitation.

लोचनाभिराम घनस्याम रामरूप सिसु,  
 सखी कहै सखीसों तूँ प्रेमपय पालि, री।  
 बालक नृपालजूकें ख्याल ही पिनाकु तोर्यो,  
 मंडलीक-मंडली-प्रताप-दापु दालि री॥  
 जनकको, सियाको, हमारो, तेरो, तुलसीको,  
 सबको भावतो हैहै, मैं जो कह्यो कालि, री।  
 कौसिलाकी कोखिपर तोषि तन वारिये, री  
 राय दशरथकी बलैया लीजै आलि री॥12॥

12. lōcanābhirāma ghanasyāma rāmarūpa sisu,  
 sakhī kahai sakhīsōm tūm' prēmapaya pāli, rī.  
 bālaka nṛpālajūkēm khyāla hī pināku tōryō,  
 maṇḍalīka-maṇḍalī-pratāpa-dāpu dāli rī..  
 janakakō, siyākō, hamārō, tērō, tulasīkō,  
 sabakō bhāvatō hvaihai, mairm jō kahyō kālī, rī.  
 kausilākī kōkhipara tōśī tana vāriyē, rī  
 rāya daṣarat'thakī balaiyā lijai āli rī..12..

Verse no. 1/12—One female friend (sakhī) said to her companion, 'Oh friend! You should nourish the adorable form of Lord Sri Ram—whose dark complexioned body, which resembles a rain-bearing cloud, is most lovable, bewitching and soothing for the eyes of the beholder—with the symbolic milk of a heart-felt affection and love for him. See, this Prince has broken the bow by a mere wish (i.e. extremely easily and without the least effort) after having crushed the vanity and haughtiness of the assembled kings who were very proud of their valour, strength and abilities.

[There were thousands of great kings and princes who had assembled at the venue to try their luck at breaking the bow and marrying Sita. All of them had tried their best individually as well as collectively, but weren't able to move the bow even a bit, what to talk of lifting it and breaking it. It's such a wonder that the same bow has been effortlessly lifted and broken by a Prince of such a tender age, i.e. Lord Sri Ram. It's nothing short of a miracle.<sup>1</sup>]

As I had told you yesterday (i.e. had predicted), the wishes of king Janak, Sita, our, your and Tulsidas—all our wishes will now be fulfilled. [We had all wished that Sita should be married to Sri Ram, and now our dream will come true.<sup>2</sup>]

Oh dear! Now be satisfied and offer (sacrifice) yourself on the son of Kaushalya (i.e. Sri Ram) and sing the glories and good fortunes of king Dasrath (that he is fortunate to have Ram as his son).'



[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, (i) from Doha no. 250—to Chaupai line nos. 1-5 that precede Doha no. 251; (ii) Chaupai line nos. 5-8 that precede Doha no. 261.

<sup>2</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, (i) from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 222—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 223; (ii) Chaupai line nos. 1-6 that precede Doha no. 249; (iii) from Chaupai line nos. 6-8 that precede Doha no. 255; (iv) from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 258—to Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 259; and (v) Chaupai line nos. 3-7 that precede Doha no. 263.]

दूब दधि रोचनु कनक थार भरि भरि  
आरति सँवारि बर नारि चलीं गावतीं ।  
लीन्हें जयमाल करकंज सोहैं जानकीके  
पहिरावो राघोजूको सखियाँ सिखावतीं ।।  
तुलसी मुदित मन जनकनगर-जन  
झाँकतीं झरोखें लागीं सोभा रानीं पावतीं ।  
मनहुँ चकोरीं चारु बैठीं निज निज नीड  
चंदकी किरिन पीवैं पलकौ न लावतीं ।।13।।

13. dūba dadhi rōcanu kanaka thāra bhari bhari  
ārati samvāri bara nāri calīm gāvatīm.  
līnhēm jayamāla karakanja sōhaiṁ jānakikē  
pahirāvō rāghōjūkō sakhiyām sikhāvatīm..  
tulasī mudita mana janakanagara-jana  
jhāmkatīm jharōkhēm lāgīm sōbhā rānīm pāvatīm.  
manahum cakōrīm cāru baiṭhīm nija nija nīḍa  
candakī kirina pīvairī palakau na lāvatīm..13..

Verse no. 1/13—Married women whose husbands were alive, held golden plates arranged with paraphernalia such as green grass, curd and ‘Roli’ (a mixture of powdered turmeric and lime) that are needed to perform the ceremonial ‘Aarti’<sup>1</sup> started moving towards Sri Ram and Sita, singing auspicious songs all the while. (1)

Janki’s (Sita, the bride’s) hands look pretty as she holds the ‘Jaimaal’ (the garland of victory which she would place around the neck of the victorious Prince as a token of marriage). The maids and her companions advise her to put the garland around Sri Ram’s neck. (2)

Tulsidas says that all the residents of Jankpur are happy and euphoric. The queens, who have come to see the ceremony and are peeping from the balcony-windows, look beauteous and magnificent as if pretty she-Chakors<sup>2</sup>, sitting in their nests, are constantly gazing at the rays of the moon (i.e their gaze is transfixed at the captivating beauty of Lord Sri Ram). (3-4)

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Arti/Aarti—It is the showing of lighted lamps on a platter as an auspicious gesture to honour the guest and show that he is welcome and respected. Arti is performed during all religious rites to honour the deity worshipped. When an honoured guest arrives at someone’s place, he is also welcomed with a Arti. The plate containing the lighted oil lamps is moved in a clockwise fashion in front of the person or the deity concerned.

The light of the lamps is symbolic of the lighted path that stands for a bright future that is wished for the person to whom the Arti is shown. As for the worshipped deity, they indicate that the deity is being given great respect and honour.

The Arti is a tradition since ancient times in India. It is a gesture to show the concerned person that he is warmly welcome, that his best future is hoped for, and that all his misfortunes represented by darkness should be removed in the light of the lamps.

The process of doing Aarti has been described by Goswami Tulsidas in his book 'Vinai Patrika', verse nos. 47-48.

<sup>2</sup>Chakor—It is the Indian red-legged partridge. It is believed to be so enamoured of the moon that it keeps its gaze fixed on the moon as it traverses across the night sky. Here, the queens are compared to the she-Chakor, and Lord Ram to the full moon.]

नगर निसान बर बाजैं ब्योम दुंदुभी  
बिमान चढ़ि गान कैके सुरनारि नाचहीं ।  
जयति जय तिहुँ पुर जयमाल राम उर  
बरषैं सुमन सुर रुरे रूप राचहीं ।।  
जनकको पनु जयो, सबको भावतो भयो  
तुलसी मुदित रोम-रोम मोद माचहीं ।  
सावँरो किसोर गोरी सोभापर तन तोरी  
जोरी जियो जुग-जुग जुवती-जन जाचहीं ।।14 ।।

14. nagara nisāna bara bājair̥ byōma dundubhīm  
bimāna caḍhi gāna kaikē suranāri nācahīm.  
jayati jaya tihum̐ pura jayamāla rāma ura  
baraśair̥ sumana sura rūrē rūpa rācahīm..  
janakakō panu jayō, sabakō bhāvatō bhayō  
tulasī mudita rōma-rōma mōda mācahīm.  
sāvam̐rō kisōra gōrī sōbhāpara tr̥ṇa tōrī  
jōrī jiyō juga-juga juvatī-jana jācahīm..14..

Verse no. 1/14—Drums are being played in the city (of Janakpur), and kettle-drums in the sky (being played by the Gods). The Goddesses are dancing and singing on board their aerial vehicles. Jubilant cries of adulation and celebration are echoing in all the corners of the 3 worlds<sup>1</sup>. The 'Jaimaal' (victory-garland) adorns the neck of Sri Ram. The Gods are showering flowers to celebrate the occasion and also because they are enchanted by the peerlessly pretty image of the Lord (Sri Ram). (1-2)

Tulsidas says that the vow of king Janak has been fulfilled, and so are the desires of all the people (that Sri Ram should become the groom). Hence, every pore of their bodies have been filled with joy and ecstasy of the highest order.

[Janak had made a vow that he would marry his daughter Sita to anyone who breaks the bow of Lord Shiva that had been lying since ages with his family. Though he was exceedingly desirous of seeing Lord Ram as Sita's groom yet his vows forced him to observe restraint. Because at this juncture when all the kings and princes of the world had assembled at Janakpur, it would be highly scandalous to change the condition at the last moment. It would surely incite the invited guests and there was all chance of an armed revolt, something Janak abhorred on this occasion. So, when Sri Ram succeeded in breaking the bow, no one felt more relieved than Janak because his desires had been fulfilled without having to break the vow.<sup>2</sup>] (3)

Ladies are absolutely enthralled at the beauteous and captivating sight of the dark complexioned Prince and the fair Princess (Lord Ram and Sita respectively), and they invoke magical charms, by breaking blades of grass, for the welfare and long life of the couple as well as to ward-off evil eyes upon them. (4)

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The 3 Worlds are the heaven, the earth, and the nether world.

<sup>2</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, (i) from Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 215—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 217; (ii) from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 249—to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 250; and (iii) from Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 251—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 252.]

भले भूप कहत भलें भदेस भूपनि सों  
 लोक लखि बोलिये पुनीत रीति मारिषी ।  
 जगदंबा जानकी जगतपितु रामचन्द्र  
 जानि जियँ जोहौ जो न लागै मुँह कारिखी ।।  
 देखे हैं अनेक ब्याह, सुने हैं पुरान बेद  
 बूझे हैं सुजान साधु नर-नारि पारिखी ।  
 ऐसे सम समधी समाज न बिराजमान,  
 रामु-से न बर दुलही न सिय-सारिखी ।।15 ।।

15. bhalē bhūpa kahata bhalēm bhadēsa bhūpani sōm  
 lōka lakhi bōliyē punīta rīti mārīśī.  
 jagadambā jānakī jagatapitu rāmacandra  
 jāni jiyam̐ jōhau jō na lāgai mum̐ha kārīkhī..  
 dēkhē hair̐ anēka byāha, sunē hair̐ purāna bēda  
 būjhē hair̐ sujāna sādhu nara-nāri pārikhī.  
 aisē sama samadhī samāja na birājamāna,  
 rāmu-sē na bara dulahī na siya-sārikhī..15..

Verse no. 1/15—Wise and rationale kings tried to reason with and make those kings who were haughty, rash and wicked see sense by advising them, 'Considering the occasion, all of you should talk properly like an Aarya king (a noble king of great ancestry). (1)

Considering Sita as the 'Mother of the world' and Sri Ram as the 'Father', look at them with such thoughts in the mind which would not blacken your faces. [That is, do not put yourselves to utter shame and ingnominy by harbouring any evil thought of marrying Sita. Remember: since they are the Mother and the Father of this creation they are eternally inseparable from each other, and therefore their union is a certainty. So, don't ever think of trying to act smart and harbour the desire that you will break the bow and marry Sita, for she is eternally wedded to Lord Ram. Stop behaving like rogues, hooligans and ruffians.<sup>1</sup>] (2)

We have seen many marriages, have heard the Vedas & Purans, and have consulted and enquired from the best of good-hearted people (Sadhus) and other learned men and women, but in-laws with such an equal stature and their respective entourage of equal magnificence is nowhere to be found, and neither is there a groom like Lord Sri Ram nor a bride like Sita to be found anywhere in this world. [That is, this is an historically unique moment, and therefore don't spoil it by cheap squabbling and futile antics. Rather, enjoy the moment and thank your stars that you have been lucky to participate in this auspicious ceremony.] (3-4)

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Amongst the invited kings there were some who were wise and erudite. As soon as they saw Lord Ram and Sita they realised that they weren't ordinary prince and princess but some Divine Being in a human form. So they desisted from participating in the competition. On the other hand, there were thousands of other kings who were driven by passion and desire for fame and were haughty of their

strength and abilities. They decided that if they managed to break the bow then not only will they marry the prettiest princess on earth but also establish themselves as the greatest king of unmatched strength amongst their peer at a public forum. So, they were blinded and couldn't see reason. As it transpired, all of them failed to move the bow and sat down on their seats crestfallen. When Lord Ram broke the bow and Sita put the victory-garland around the Lord's neck, these defeated kings rose up in revolt, seeing some kind of trick being played upon them. Once again, the good kings sternly rebuked them, telling them that this ignominy is their own invite for had they listened to the former's advise earlier, this insulting situation would not have arisen.

Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, (i) from Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 245—to Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 246; and (ii) from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 266—to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 267.]

बानी बिधि गौरी हर सेसहूँ गनेस कही,  
 सही भरी लोमस भुसुंड़ि बहुबारिषो ।  
 चारिदस भुवन निहारि नर-नारि सब  
 नारदसों परदा न नारदु सो पारिखो ॥  
 तिन्ह कही जगमें जगमगति जोरी एक  
 दूजो को कहैया औ सुनैया वष चारिखो ।  
 रमा रमारमन सुजान हनुमान कही  
 सीय-सी न तीय न पुरुष राम-सारिखो ॥16॥

16. bānī bidhi gaurī hara sēsahūṁ ganēsa kahī,  
 sahī bharī lōmasa bhusuṇḍi bahubāriśō.  
 cāridasa bhuvana nihāri nara-nāri saba  
 nāradasōṁ paradā na nāradu sō pārikhō..  
 tinha kahī jagamēm jagamagati jōrī ēka  
 dūjō kō kahaiyā au sunaiyā caśa cārikhō.  
 ramā ramāramana sujāna hanumāna kahī  
 sīya-sī na tīya na puruśa rāma-sārikhō..16..

Verse no. 1/16—Not only Saraswati (the goddess of knowledge), Brahma (the creator), Parvati (the divine consort of Lord Shiva and the Mother Goddess), Shiva (the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the Trinity and the most enlightened god), Shesh (the legendary serpent who has thousand hoods and is supposed to support the earth on them) and Ganesh (the god who is wise, erudite and foremost amongst the pantheon of gods) have said, but it has also been reiterated by the long-living sage Lomash and crow Kaghbhusand as well as by sage Narad from whom nothing is hidden in this world and who knows everything about the destiny of all living beings—that after surveying all the 14 Bhuvans (divisions of the world) they have come to the conclusion that the pair of Sri Ram and Sita is the only one that shines everywhere.

Say, who in this creation has better eyes, or even four eyes to see things in a better way, and is better equipped and competent to affirm a thing and establish its truth than the holy ones listed above?

[That is, if the gods and goddesses as well as sages say that there is no other couple who look as glorious and majestic as Lord Ram and Sita anywhere in this world, then it is certain to be the fact and reality. So there is no question of doubting them. Everywhere they looked they found the same divine couple present in all the

magnificent splendour—because they are the manifested form of the omnipresent and all-pervading Supreme Being and his counterpart, Mother Goddess.]

Even Ramaa (Laxmi, the divine consort of Lord Vishnu and the goddess of wealth), Ramaa-raman (Lord Vishnu, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the Trinity and the care-taker of this creation) and Hanuman (an incarnation of Lord Shiva and one of the greatest devotees of Lord Ram), who are well steeped in wisdom and are highly erudite, have asserted that there is no woman like Sita and no man like Ram in this creation.

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, (i) Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 265; (ii) Chaupai line no. 2-6 that precede Doha no. 325.]

दूलह श्रीरघुनाथु बने दुलही सिय सुंदर मंदिर माहीं ।  
गावति गीत सबै मिलि सुंदरि बेद जुवा जुरि बिप्र पढ़ाहीं ॥  
रामको रूपु निहारति जानकी कंकनके नगकी परछाहीं ।  
यातें सबै सुधि भूलि गई कर टेकि रही पल टारत नाहीं ॥ 17 ॥

17. dūlaha śrīraghunāthu banē dulaḥī siya sundara mandira māhīm.  
gāvati gīta sabai mili sundari bēda juvā juri bipra paṛhāhīm..  
rāmakō rūpu nihāрати jānakī kaṅkanakē nagakī parachāhīm.  
yātēm sabai sudhi bhūli ga'ī kara ṭēki rahī pala ṭārata nāhīm..17..

Verse no. 1/17—In the beautiful palace, Sita is decked-up like a bride in all finery, and Sri Ram looks astoundingly adorable as a groom. All the pretty women are collectively singing auspicious songs appropriate for the occasion, and young Brahmin boys are reciting the Vedas.

At the moment, Janki (Sita) is watching the bewitchingly beautiful image of Sri Ram as reflected from the mirror-like gem studded in her bracelet, and this has so enamoured and enthralled her that she has become unaware of her surroundings. Her hands have become immobile (lest she might lose the image of her beloved Lord if she moves her hand) and she has stopped batting even her eyelids (so that she can continuously stare at this image).

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chanda line nos. 9-10 that precede Doha no. 327.]

### The spat between sage Parashuram and Laxman

भूपमंडली प्रचंड चंडीस-कोदंडु खंड्यौ,  
चंड बाहुदंडु जाको ताहीसों कहतु हौं ।  
कठिन कुठार-धार धरिबेको धीर ताहि,  
बीरता बिदित ताको देखिये चहतु हौं ॥  
तुलसी समाजु राज तजि सो बिराजै आजु,  
गाज्यौ मृगराजु गजराजु ज्यौं गहतु हौं ।  
छोनीमें न छड्यौ छप्यो छेनिपको छोना छोटे,  
छेनिप छपन बाँको बिरुद बहतु हौं ॥ 18 ॥

18. bhūpamaṇḍalī pracaṇḍa caṇḍīsa-kōdaṇḍu khaṇḍyau,  
caṇḍa bāhudaṇḍu jākō tāhīsōm kahatu hauṁ.  
kaṭhina kuṭhāra-dhāra dharibēkō dhīra tāhi,  
bīratā bidita tākō dēkhiyē cahatu hauṁ..  
tulasī samāju rāja taji sō birājai āju,

gājyau mrgarāju gajarāju jyōm gahatu hauṁ.  
chōnīmēm na chāḍyau chapyō chōnipakō chōnā chōṭō,  
chōnipa chapana bām̐kō biruda bahatu hauṁ..18..

Verse no. 1/18—[Parashuram thundered angrily and said]:- 'I speak to the one who has broken the stern and formidable bow of Lord Shiva in the assembly of kings, and whose arms are very strong. I challenge him and wish to test whether his patience and famous courage can bear (face) the sharp edge of my hard axe. Let him step out of the assembly. I shall catch him like a lion catches an elephant. I have not spared even the infants of kings on this earth; I have a reputation of being the 'exterminator of kings'.'

[Note—This entire episode is narrated in great detail in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 268—to Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 284.

Briefly, when sage Parashuram had heard of the breaking of Shiva's bow, he became exceedingly angry as Shiva was his deity and he took this breaking of the bow as an insult of the Lord. So he came huffing and puffing at the marriage venue to take revenge. An angry spat followed between the sage and Laxman, Lord Ram's younger brother. All the while, Lord Ram remained calm and apologetic, and appealed to the sage to calm down. Finally, the sage relented, and after realising that Ram was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu he paid his obeisance to the Lord and went away to do penance in the mountains.

The story of Parashuram is as follows:--

*Parashuram* or Ram with a battle-axe—This is the sixth incarnation of Vishnu. Parashuram was the youngest of the five sons of sage Jamdaagni and his wife Renuka. He had subdued the haughty Kshatriya race or the warrior race led by king Kaartavirya who had become tyrannical and were oppressing others. The story goes that once Jamdagni doubted the infidelity of his wife Renuka and therefore asked his sons to behead her. The four sons refused and were cursed by him, but Parashuram did as told. The father was pleased and asked Parashuram to request for a boon, upon which the latter requested that his mother be revived, his brothers be pardoned, and Jamdagni should discard his angry temperament. The father agreed to all.

Jamdagni was killed by Shursena, also known as 'Sahastraarjun' because he had a thousand arms. He was the son of Kaartavirya-Arjuna. The story in brief is as follows:— There was once a thousand-armed Kshatriya (warrior class) king known as 'Sahastraarjun' or 'Arjun with a thousand hands'. Once he approached the Ocean and asked who was stronger than him. The Ocean told him that sage Jamdagni's son Parashuram was a fit match for him and would welcome him in battle. Such was Sahastraarjun's sense of ego and pride that he could not bear that someone stronger be there on earth in his presence. So he collected his huge army and went to the hermitage of sage Jamdagni.

The sage duly welcomed the king and extended warm hospitality to him. Sahastraarjun was however astonished at the lavish way the forest-dwelling hermit had entertained him. So he wanted to know the reason. Upon finding out that the sage managed to do this miracle because he possessed a divine cow known as 'Kamdhenū' or Kapila cow which could produce anything desired in an instant, the greedy king was filled with jealousy. Driven by avarice and rapacity, he demanded that the sage give this cow to him. Obviously Jamdagni refused. So the king forcefully snatched the cow from him and in the ensuing tussle he killed Jamdagni.

At that time, Jamdagni's brave son Parashuram was not there. When he returned, home he found his mother grieving. Coming to know of the reason, he immediately took the vow that he will eliminate all the Kshatriya kings from the surface of the earth by killing all of them. His mother had beaten her chest twenty-one times as a sign of mourning, so he declared that he will continue to wipe out the Kshatriya kings for an equal number of times, i.e. for twenty-one generations.

He comforted his mother and attacked Sahastraarjun, severed all his thousand arms with his battle-axe and then killed him. {This story is narrated in Srimad Bhagwat's Aashwamedhik Parva.}

Extremely peeved by the Kshatriya race to which this king belonged, Parashuram vowed to eliminate the entire race from the surface of the earth as a revenge for the killing of his father. This was the reason why Parashuram had fought and killed thousands of Kshatriyas to avenge the killing of his father by Sahastraarjun.

A slight variation of this story appears in Mahabharat, Vanparva. According to this version, when the thousand-armed king known as 'Sahastraarjun' had taken away Jamdagni's all wish fulfilling cow known as Kamdhenu, Parashuram rushed to cut all the arms of Sahastraarjun as punishment. Sahastraarjun's kith and kin came back to the hermitage of Jamdagni when Parashuram was not there, and took revenge by killing the sage. Parashuram's mother grieved and wailed. When Parashuram came back and discovered what had happened, he promised his mother that he would take revenge, and vowed to kill all the Kshatriya kings on the surface of the earth to avenge Sahastraarjun's killing of his father. So in this way he had also fulfilled the wishes of his mother.

This fact that Parashuram had avenged his father's death by killing the Kshatriya kings because one of the members of this race, king Sahastraarjun, had killed his father sage Jamdagni, is lauded by Lord Ram in Valmiki Ramayan, Baal Kand, Canto 76, verse no. 2.

In Mahabharat, Shantiparva, Canto 49, verse nos. 45-47 it is mentioned that it was Sahastraarjun's son who had stolen the Kamdhenu cow, and not Sahastraarjun himself.

It ought to be noted that 'Sahastraarjun' is also known as 'Sahastrabaahu' because he had a thousand arms.

Now, after unnecessarily killing so many innocent Kshatriya kings, who had committed no offence, just to avenge his father's death at the hands of Sahastraarjun, sage Parashuram was severely criticized by the community of Brahmins, which made the sage contrite and full of guilt. So, with a somber and disgusted mood, he went to the forest to do penance. At that time, sage Vishwamitra's grandson named Paraivasu came to him and teased him, saying, 'A fire sacrifice was done recently in which so many countless Kshatriya kings had come. But you did not kill any of them, thereby disobeying the promise you had made to your mother and have also violated your own vows. This is a sin in itself.' Peeved and instigated, Parashuram rose immediately and went berserk, killing and hacking all the kings and their kith and kin at random. Their pregnant wives somehow escaped by hiding here and there. After this, Parashuram performed a Horse Sacrifice known as the 'Ashwamedh Yajya', and gave the entire land (earth) that he had snatched from the kings to sage Kashyap as donation or gift during this sacrifice.

Sage Kashyap was wise, and he was worried that if some way out is not found then one day Parashuram will create such a situation by repeatedly killing kings that there would be no one to take care of the creatures who inhabit the planet, because the

main function of the Kshatriya kings was to look after the welfare of the subjects of their kingdoms and protect the earth from marauding savages.

So Kashyap told Parashuram, 'Now that you have given me this earth as a gift, it belongs to me, and henceforth you have no right to kill any of its inhabitants (including of course the kings). You go to the shore of the southern ocean and do Tapa there.' After this, Parashuram lived on the shore of the southern ocean during the day, and left the earth during the night.

This version of the story is clearly mentioned in Valmiki Ramayan, Baal Kand, Canto 75, verse nos. 25-26, and Canto 76, verse nos. 13-14.

While normally the killing of the Kshatriya kings repeatedly by sage Parashuram seems to be a taint on his saintly and hermit-like life and upbringing, there is a profound philosophy behind it. Now let us examine it.

As time passed, by and by, the Kshatriya class had become very haughty and arrogant because all physical powers and military strength were vested in it. The king's treasury was supposed to be a common pool where the society could keep its wealth that it generates by toil, and the king was merely its custodian. But as time passed, the kings began to treat this treasury as their personal property, and while they rolled in luxury the peasant class, the working class that toiled day in and day out to generate this wealth hadn't a square meal to dump in their empty tummies and a roof to cover them against the vagaries of cruel Nature. Though the powers and wealth of the Kshatriya class were meant for the welfare of the society as a whole, more often than not these elements went to the head of kings, making them arrogant, haughty, exploitative and insensitive towards others.

We read about an incarnation of Lord Vishnu in the form of sage Parashuram who had eliminated the Kshatriya race several times over by killing them and handing over the earth to the Brahmins. The elimination of such wild kings belonging to the Kshatriya Varna who had deviated from their duties and moral responsibilities that were ordained by ancient sages and seers became obligatory for the Supreme Lord of the world as the Lord was the Father of all, and he could not bear with one of his offsprings making others suffer because of his own pervert behaviour and selfishness. Hence, the Lord assumed the form of sage Parashuram to teach a lesson to such wicked kings who had fallen from their paths.

Killing such Kshatriya kings and restoring the earth to Brahmins should be viewed in this context; it has a great symbolic meaning. Whenever evil tendencies and negativity rises in this world, be it in the guise of demons or kings, the Lord comes down to set the house in order. This is the reason why sage Parashuram is regarded as one of the many incarnations of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Lord of the world.

The logical spin-off of this is that Lord Ram and sage Parashuram are both the same Lord in different roles. What Lord Ram did for the welfare of sages and the humble creatures of the world by killing their tormentor demons led by Ravana of Lanka, sage Parashuram did the same thing by killing arrogant and wicked Kshatriya kings and handing over the world to pious and holy men known as Brahmins. The fact that sage Parashuram had repeatedly killed the Kshatriya kings and handed the earth over to Brahmins is mentioned in Tulsidas' epic story of Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 6-8 that precede Doha no. 272

The *Shiva-Puran* has narrated the story of sage Parashuram as follows—  
There was a king named Gadhi. His daughter was named Satyavati. Satyavati was married to the sage Richika. Richika arranged for a spectacular sacrifice. Some rice pudding was obtained from the yajna and Richika gave it to his wife Satyavati.



He said, ‘Split this rice pudding into two halves. Eat half yourself and give the remaining half to your mother. Here, let me divide it. This is your half and that is your mother’s. We are Brahmins. So we will have a son who will display the traits of a Brahmin. Your father is a Kshatriya, and your mother will have a son who will behave like a Kshatriya.’

Saying this, Richika went off to meditate in the forest. But mother and daughter managed to mix up their halves. In the course of his meditations, Richika realized that Satyavati was going to give birth to a Brahmin son who would display Kshatriya traits.

Through his powers, he managed to postpone this birth by a generation. So Satyavati gave birth to Jamadagni. It was Jamadagni’s son Parashuram who exhibited all the Kshatriya like characteristics.

Gadhi’s son was Vishvamitra. Vishvamitra was born a Kshatriya. But because of the mixing up of the rice pudding, Vishvamitra turned out to be Brahmin-like.

There was a king of the Haihaya dynasty named Arjun. He had a thousand arms. He had also obtained the boon that flaming fire itself would be perpetually present on the tip of his arrow. Whenever he shot an arrow, the fire from the tip of the arrow burnt up the target. In this fashion, Arjuna used to burn up villages, cities and forests. He once burnt up the hermitages of sages. And one of the sages cursed Arjun that he would be killed by Parashuram.

Parashurama learnt the art of fighting from Shiva himself. While Parashuram was away learning how to fight, Arjuna arrived in Jamadagni’s hermitage. Jamadagni had a wonderful cow (dhenu), known as a kamadhenu because it produced whatever objects one asked (Kama) from it. Using this Kamadhenu, Jamadagni treated Arjun and his entrie retinue to a royal feast.

Arjun asked Jamadangi to give him this cow, but the sage refused. Arjun then asked his soldiers to forcibly take away the cow. But just as this was going on, Parashuram arrived. He killed Arjun, slicing off Arjun’s thousand arms in the process.

Having disposed of Arjun, Parashuram went off to meditate and pay another visit to Shiva.

Taking advantage of Parashuram’s absence, Arjun’s sons invaded Jamadagni’s hermitage. They killed Jamadagni. When Parashurama returned, he exacted vengeance for this evil deed. He killed Arjuna’s sons. Since Arjuna and his sons happened to be Kshatriyas, Parashuram also killed all the Kshatriyas in the world. He did this not once, but twenty-one times over. Why twenty-one times? The reason was that there were twenty-one weapon-marks on the dead Jamadagni’s body.

But killing was a crime and Parashuram had committed a sin. As penance, Parashuram donated cows and performed a lot of Tapa. He also arranged an Ashvamedha Yagya, the great horse-sacrifice. All this did not prove to be atonement enough. To complete the penance, Parashuram sought the advice of the sage Kashyapa. Kashyapa told him to perform the donation that is known as Tulaa-Purush. A Tula (or ‘Tulaa-danda’) is a pair of scales; the person (Purush) who is performing the donation is placed on one side of the weighing scale. On the other side are placed objects like honey, clarified butter, molasses, clothing and gold. The weight of the objects being donated has to be equal to the weight of the person performing the donation. This is known as ‘Tulaa-purush’. Parashuram performed Tulaa-purusha and was freed from his sin.

In Tulsidas’ epic “Ram Charit Manas”, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 268, sage Parashuram is called “Bhrigu-pati Kamal Patangaa”,

which literally means ‘the lord in the family of sage Bhrigu (Bhrigu-pati), one who was like the sun (Patangaa) with respect to this family representing a lotus (Kamal)’. The metaphor of ‘the sun and the lotus flower’ is used to mean that Parashuram gave great fame and glory to this family of great sages who felt happy that he was a member of their race just like the lotus flower that feels so happy when the sun rises in the sky that it opens its petals to indicate its joy at the sight of the sun.

Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Doha no. 268 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 4-8 describe the external form (appearance) of sage Parashuram when he came to the venue of the bow-breaking ceremony at Janakpur upon hearing that Lord Shiva’s bow has been broken.]

निपट निदरि बोले बचन कुठारपानि,  
 मानी त्रास औनिपनि मानो मौनता गही ।  
 रोष माखे लखनु अकनि अनखोही बातैं,  
 तुलसी बिनीत बानी बिहसि ऐसी कही ।।  
 सुजस तिहारें भरे भुअन भृगुतिलक,  
 प्रगट प्रतापु आपु कह्यो सो सबै सही ।  
 दूट्यौ सो न जुरैगो सरासनु महेसजूको,  
 रावरी पिनाकमें सरीकता कहाँ रही ।।19।।

19. nipaṭa nidari bōlē bacana kuṭhārapāni,  
 mānī trāsa aunipani mānō maunatā gahī.  
 rōśa mākhē lakhanu akani anakhōhī bātairi,  
 tulasī binīta bānī bihasi aisī kahī..  
 sujasa tihārēṁ bharē bhu'ana bhrigutilaka,  
 pragaṭa pratāpu āpu kahyō sō sabai sahī.  
 dūṭyau sō na juraigō sarāsanu mahēsajūkō,  
 rāvarī pinākamēṁ sarīkatā kahām̐ rahī..19..

Verse no. 1/19—When sage Parashuram started venting his anger and spoke harshly (that he would punish anyone who had dared to break the bow, and went around the arena peering belligerently at all the assembled kings and princes to know who did it), all the assembled kings became terrified and lost their wits, become dumb out of fear as if they had all taken a vow of silence.

Hearing the sage mouthing much un-warranted angry words, Laxman too became very angry. But though angry, he managed to restrain himself and spoke to the sage with a smirk and a sly smile on his face: 'Oh the most exalted amongst the clan of sage Brighu! Your fame has spread all over the 14 Bhuvans (i.e. in all the corners of the world). Your famous valour which you have just described (and boasted about) is true. [And what was that boast? It was that Parashuram had repeatedly exterminated all the kings on the earth, not sparing even their children.]

But the bow of Lord Shiva, which has been already broken, cannot be soldered back. You had no share (like a property-share) in it (the bow) which can cause you to become so angry, annoyed and agitated. [That is, one usually becomes angry when someone interferes with someone’s personal property or a thing in which the other person has some interest and share. This bow was Shiva’s bow, and everyone has equal right over anything belonging to the Lord. Say, if Shiva himself has no objection or problem with the bow getting broken, why is the sage so angry as if he had some sort of copyright over it? The actual offense has been committed

against Shiva, and not against Parashuram. There are thousands of great devotees of Lord Shiva, and no one has felt offended or insulted. So what annoys Parashuram so much?']

गर्भके अर्भक काटनको पटु धार कुठारु कराल है जाको ।  
 सोई हौं बूझत राजसभा 'धनु को दल्यौ' हौं दलिहौं बलु ताको ।।  
 लघु आनन उत्तर देत बड़े लरिहै मरिहै करिहै कछु साको ।  
 गाँरो गरुर गुमान भर्यौ कहौ कौसिक छोटे-सो ढोटे है काको ।।20 ।।

20. garbhakē arbhaka kāṭanakōṃ paṭu dhāra kuṭhāru karāla hai jākō.  
 sō'ī haum̐ būjhata rājasabhā 'dhanu kō dalyau' haum̐ dalihaum̐ balu tākō..  
 laghu ānana utara dēta baṛē larihāi marihai karihai kachu sākō.  
 gōrō garūra gumāna bharyau kahau kausika chōṭō-sō ḍhōṭō hai kākō..20..

Verse no. 1/20—[Then Parashuram said]:- 'I, whose terrible axe's sharp edge is capable of cutting (i.e. killing) a child in its mother's womb, demand to know who has broken the bow in this assembly. I will destroy (crush) his strength. You (Laxman) are haughty and loud-mouthed! Would you get any fame by entangling yourself in a duel (with me unnecessarily) and getting killed?

Oh Kaushik (sage Viswamitra)! Whose son is this fair-complexioned and haughty little boy?"

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Doha no. 271; Chaupai line nos. 1-4 that precede Doha no. 274.]

मखु राखिबेके काज राजा मेरे संग दए,  
 दले जातुधान जे जितैया बिबुधेसके ।  
 गौतमकी तीय तारी, मेटे अघ भूरि भार,  
 लोचन-अतिथि भए जनक जनेसके ।।  
 चंड बाहुदंड-बल चंडीस-कोदंडु खंड्यौ,  
 ब्याही जानकी, जीते नरेस देस-देसके ।  
 साँवरे-गोरे सरीर धीर महाबीर दोऊ,  
 नाम रामु लखनु कुमार कोसलेसके ।।21 ।।

21. makhu rākhibēkē kāja rājā mērē saṅga da'e,  
 dalē jātudhāna jē jītaiyā bibudhēsakē.  
 gautamakī tiya tāri, mēṭē agha bhūri bhāra,  
 lōcana-atithi bha'e janaka janēsakē..  
 caṇḍa bāhudaṇḍa-bala caṇḍisa-kōdaṇḍu khaṇḍyau,  
 byāhī jānakī, jītē narēsa dēsa-dēsakē.  
 sām'varē-gōrē sarīra dhīra mahābīra dō'ū,  
 nāma rāmu lakhanu kumāra kōsalēsakē..21..

Verse no. 1/21—[Then Viswamitra replied]:- 'King Dasrath had sent them (Ram and Laxman) to accompany me to protect my fire sacrifice, and they had slayed such demons who had been able to conquer even Indra (the king of Gods). Sage Gautam's wife Ahilya (who had been turned into stone by a curse) has been liberated and freed from a terrible sin. Now they have become a guest of king Janak's eyes (i.e. king Janak is so fascinated by them that he constantly keeps watching them). He has broken the bow of Lord Shiva by the strength of his strong arms, and has wed Janki

after vanquishing kings from numerous kingdoms. The names of these dark and fair complexioned boys who are very brave and courageous are Ram and Laxman respectively. They are the princes of king Dasrath of Kaushal (Ayodhya).'

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 6-7 that precede Doha no. 269.]

काल कराल नृपालन्हके धनुभंगु सुनै फरसा लिउँ धाए ।  
लक्खनु रामु बिलोकि सप्रेम महारिसतैं फिरी आँखि दिखाए ।।  
धीरसिरोमनि बीर बड़े बिनयी बिजयी रघुनाथु सुहाए ।  
लायक हे भृगुनायकु, से धनु-सायक सौँपि सुभायँ सिधाए ।।22 ।।

22. *kāla karāla nrpālanhakē dhanubhaṅgu sunai pharasā li'ēm' dhā'ē.*  
*lakkhanu rāmu bilōki saprēma mahārisatēm phirī āṁkhi dikhā'ē.*  
*dhīrasirōmani bīra barē binayī bijayī raghunāthu suhā'ē.*  
*lāyaka hē bhrgunāyaku, sē dhanu-sāyaka saumpi subhāyam' sidhā'ē..22..*

Verse no. 1/22—Hearing about the breaking of the Bow (of Lord Shiva), sage Parashuram raised his axe and ran to take revenge. He came, and at first saw with affectionate eyes the lovable sight of Lord Ram and Sri Laxman, but then turned his eyes red with anger. Lord Ram is, by nature, very patient, tolerant, forgiving and humble, but at the same time he is also very courageous, brave, valiant, fearless and invincible. [That is, one must not think that Lord Ram is weak and coward because he is polite and courteous. His endearing demeanours and friendly exterior hides a tough interior and a firm resolve.]

Though the king of the Bhṛigu's race, i.e. sage Parashuram, was a most able warrior, but still he was subdued by the Lord with his grace. [The Lord overcame the anger of the sage with his graceful manners and tact.] The sage handed Lord Ram his own bow and arrow, and then returned back to his hermitage. [The sage realised that he was no ordinary prince but the Supreme Lord himself who has gracefully accepted to come down on the earth to eliminate the burden of the demons from the face of the earth. So he relented and apologized. As a token of his surrender before the Lord of the world, he gave him his own bow and arrow.]

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## Ayōdhyākāṇḍa

Lord Rām's exile

कीरके कागर ज्यों नृपचीर, बिभूषण उप्पम अंगनि पाई।  
औध तजी मगवासके रूख ज्यों, पंथके साथ ज्यों लोग लोगाई॥  
संग सुबंधु, पुनीत प्रिया, मनो धर्मु क्रिया धरि देह सुहाई।  
राजिवलोचन रामु चले तजि बापको राजु बटाउ कीं नाई॥१॥

1. kīrakē kāgara jyōm nṛpacīra, bibhūśana uppama aṅgani pāī.  
audha tājī magavāsakē rūkha jyōm, panthakē sātha jyōm lōga lōgāīm..  
saṅga subandhu, punīta priyā, manō dharmu kriyā dhari dēha suhāī.  
rājivalōcana rāmu calē taji bāpakō rāju baṭā'u kīm nāīm..1..

Verse no. 2/1—After putting down the royal paraphernalia, robes and jewellery that he was adorned with, Lord Ram appeared as magnificent as the parrot after abandoning its wings (i.e. after flight). [The Lord looked relaxed and calm.] (1).

He abandoned Ayodhya like the rest-houses along the path, and its citizens like the temporary companions of the wayside inns (2).

Faithful and loyal brother (Laxman) and the devoted wife (Sita) appear as if Dharma (righteousness and noble conduct) has been personified in their forms (3).

Lord Ram left his father's kingdom dispassionately as if it was someone else's property, and went to the forest cheerfully (4)

[Note—The entire episode of Lord Ram's forest exile have been narrated in Tulsidas' epic Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 13—to Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 81, and in Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse nos. 2—12.

Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Doha no. 51 sums up the idea expressed in this verse more specifically.

Briefly, it so happened that when king Dasrath, who was getting old, decided to appoint Lord Ram on the throne of the kingdom of Ayodhya and preparations got under way, Ram's step-mother Kaikeyi was incited by her favourite maid named Manthara that she should devise some way so that her own son Bharat would get the throne. To prevent any interference and revolt in this scheme it was devised that Kaikeyi would exploit some old pending promise that her husband Dasrath had made her to force him to send Sri Ram, the eldest of the four brothers, to 14 years of forest exile and then demand that Bharat be installed on the throne instead. Kaikeyi and

Manthara envisaged that during this period Bharat would firmly get hold of the things and ensure that even after the 14 year period Ram would not be able to claim the throne, even if it meant a war.

Dasrath was so true to his words that he could not deny Kaikeyi her pending promise, and thus she had her way and Ram was obliged to go to the forest for 14 years. Sita and Laxman could not bear with separation from the Lord and they too accompanied him.

Meanwhile, Dasrath was shocked exceedingly at the cruel developments and he subsequently died.

Bharat was, however, totally innocent as he was away visiting his maternal uncle's place along with his younger brother Shatrughan at that time. When message was sent to him to rush back home to Ayodhya, and on coming back he discovered all what grief and misfortune had befallen upon the family and the kingdom due to the nuisance his mother had committed, he was sorely startled and extremely disconsolate. He wept bitterly and was filled with exceeding fury at his mother. His eyes glared as he waxed in wroth in exceeding wrath as he lamented most woefully and grieved at the crest of grieving even as he vented his ire on his mother, denouncing her, chiding and upbraiding her in the sternest possible words he could muster. Quoth he—'Oh thou accursed woman. Fie upon thee! Oh thou yonder foolish woman, the selfish of the selfiest and lowly in the trough of lowliness, how darest thou standiest before me with a face blackened with deeds darker than the darkest lamp-black? Woe betide thee, thou the meanest, the wickedest and the vilest woman that walketh on the surface of the earth. Dost not thee realize and ashamed at thy self that thine act hath broughtest upon mine family a tainted scourage liketh of which none couldest have ever imagined? Wost dost thou not kill me whence thou had brought forth me into this world to face this ignominy? Shame to me that I be calleth thine son, and thou my mother. Woe to thy womb and woe to thy name. By the Creator, why should'st thou, and how darest thou, have done what thou did? Why, thou have become the cause of bereavement at the death of mine father, banishment of mine dearest brother, the parcel of mine heart without whom I can't live, and heapest thou upon me the lowliest of ill-fame by the bucket-load, the ignominy of which I wilt ne'er tidedth over till breath leaveth mine body! Woe to thee and thine name; woe to me and mine life! And let the Creator suffer me and castest upon me the greatest of sufferance by way of punishment that he hath written in his scroll of destiny. Now, in severance of all relations with thee, I command that thou wilt hasten away from my presence and scoot to the yonder at this instant and hide thine tarry face, thee and thine Gobbo companion (the hunch-back maid Manthara)—for verily I raiseth mine hands and proclaimeth as a soothsay that I not henceforward be suffered to ever haveth an unfortunate chance to casteth mine eyes upon thine evil-omened contours, and let the Creator honour mine this pledge ne'er e'er to see thy accursed face till death overtakes me. Fie upon thee and woe betide thee. Now, I ask of thee to spare me mine peace and leave me alone!!'

These sentiments of Bharat are expressly narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, (i) from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 161—to Doha no. 162; (ii) Chaupai line nos. 4-8 that precede Doha no. 164; and (iii) from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 167—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 168.

Further, Bharat's last vow not to see his mother's face till as long as he lived has been endorsed in Geetawali, Uttar Kand, verse no. 37 which is explicit on this issue.

It has also been recorded in all the versions of the Ramayana that Bharat had taken his mother to severest task, pouring scorn at her and severely rebuking her in

the strongest possible terms. Bharat declared that he will surely not accept the crown because it belonged rightly to his dearest brother Ram, and that he would go to the forest to bring the Lord back. So he set forth with all his courtiers and met Lord Ram at Chitrakoot. Bharat tried his best to persuade Ram to return, even offering to replace him in the forest if the Lord thought that their father's words ought to be honoured. But Lord Ram explained things to him privately that it was necessary for him to remain in the forest because it was a part of the planning which would culminate in the elimination of the cruel demon race, the reason for which the Lord had come to earth in the first place. Some excuse had to be found so that Lord Ram could go to the forest to meet the sages and oblige them as well as to go to the den of the demons at Lanka to eliminate them, and the entire episode of Kaikeyi invoking her due promises from Dasrath and sending Ram to the forest was merely a ploy to implement the larger plan.]

कागर कीर ज्यों भूषन-चीर सरीरु लस्यो तजि नीरु ज्यों काई ।  
मातु-पिता प्रिय लोग सबै सनमानि सुभायँ सनेह सगाई ।।  
संग सुभामिनि, भाइ भलो, दिन द्वै जनु औध हुते पहुनाई ।  
राजिवलोचन रामु चले तजि बापको राजु बटाउ की नई ।।2 ।।

2. kāgara kīra jyōm bhūśana-cīra sarīru lasyō taji nīru jyōm kā'ī.  
mātu-pitā priya lōga sabai sanamāni subhāyam' sanēha sagā'ī..  
saṅga subhāmini, bhā'i bhalō, dina dvai janu audha hutē pahunā'īm.  
rājivalōcana rāmu calē taji bāpakō rāju baṭā'u kīm nā'īm..2..

Verse no. 2/2—For the Lord, the royal clothes and ornaments were like the feathers of the parrot. After removing them from his body, he looked so magnificent and glorious as if scum had been removed from the water.

Having lovingly and respectfully addressed his parents and kin according to their mutual relations and status, the lotus-eyed Lord Ram took his beautiful wife (Sita) and faithful brother (Laxman) with him, and left his father's kingdom like a stranger who had been a guest of the king for 2-3 days would have done.

सिथिल सनेह कहैं कौसिला सुमित्राजू सों,  
मैं न लखी सौति, सखी! भगिनी ज्यों सेई है ।  
कहै मोहि मैया, कहौं-मैं न मैया, भरतकी,  
बलैया लेहौं भैया, तेरी मैया कैकेई है ।।  
तुलसी सरल भायँ रघुरायँ माय मानी,  
काय-मन-बानीहूँ न जानी कै मतेई है ।  
बाम बिधि मेरो सुखु सिरिस-सुमन-सम,  
ताको छल-छुरी को-कुलिस लै टेई है ।।3 ।।

3. sithila sanēha kahaim kausilā sumitrājū sōm,  
mair na lakhī sauti, sakhi! bhaginī jyōm sē'ī hai.  
kahai mōhi maiyā, kahaum-maim na maiyā, bharatakī,  
balaiyā lēhaum bhaiyā, tērī maiyā kaikē'ī hai..  
tulasī sarala bhāyam' raghurāyam' māya mānī,  
kāya-mana-bānihūm' na jānī kai matē'ī hai.  
bāma bidhi mērō sukhu sirisa-sumana-sama,

tākō chala-churī kō-kulisa lai tēī hai..3..

Verse no. 2/3—Mother Kaushalya became overwhelmed with emotions and said to Sumitra, ‘Oh friend! I had never treated Kaikeyi as a rival. I had always looked after her as my own sister. When Ram called me ‘mother’, I used to tell him that I was not his but Bharat’s mother. ‘Son’, I used to say, ‘I swear to you (i.e. tell you truly) that your mother is Kaikeyi.’

Lord Ram had also treated Kaikeyi as his own mother, and never as a step-mother. But the malignant and malevolent creator became jealous of our happy days, and so he mounted the knife of deceit, treachery and cunning and stabbed us with it (i.e. he corrupted the wisdom of Kaikeyi and forced her to send Ram to exile).

[Kushalya laments that it is so astonishing that Kaikeyi whom Ram used to show more affection and love than he did to me, and she also reciprocated in equal terms, had suddenly become so cruel and heartless. Surely, it’s not her fault but it is the crookedness of the creator who used her as a pawn in his evil design.]

कीजै कहा, जीजी जू!सुमित्रा परि पायँ कहै,  
तुलसी सहावै बिधि, सोई सहियतु है।  
रावरो सुभाउ रामजन्म ही तैं जानियत,  
भरतकी मातु को कि ऐसो चाहियतु है॥  
जाई राजघर, ब्याहि आई राजघर माहँ,  
राज-पूतु पाएहूँ न सुखु लहियतु है।  
देह सुधागेह, ताहि मृगहूँ मलीन कियो,  
ताहूँ पर बाहु बिनु राहु गहियतु है॥४॥

4. kījai kahā, jījī jū!sumitrā pari pāyam̐ kahai,  
tulasī sahāvai bidhi, sōī sahiyatu hai.  
rāvarō subhā'u rāmajanma hī tēm̐ jāniyata,  
bharatakī mātu kō ki aisō cahiyatu hai..  
jāī rājaghara, byāhi āī rājaghara māham̐,  
rāja-pūtu pā'ēhūm̐ na sukhu lahiyatu hai.  
dēha sudhāgēha, tāhi mrgahūm̐ malīna kiyō,  
tāhū para bāhu binu rāhu gahiyatu hai..4..

Verse no. 2/4—Sumitra fell at the feet of Kaushalya and said, ‘Sister! What can be done? We have to bear what the creator wishes. Your nature is known from the day Lord Ram was born, but should Kaikeyi have done what she did? Was it proper for her? You were born in the household of a king (as a princess), married a king (as wife of Dasrath), got a son (Lord Ram) who was most suitable and eligible to be crowned as a Regent, but still you could not enjoy happiness. See, the moon is a receptacle of Amrit (celestial elixir of happiness and eternity), but the deer has given it a bad name, and on top of it, the moon is gobbled-up by the arm-less Rahu (resulting it to be darkened during the lunar eclipse).’

Washing of Lord Rām's feet by Nishād (the boatman)

नाम अजामिल—से खल कोटि अपार नदी भव बूड़त काढ़े।  
जो सुमिरें गिरि मेरु सिलाकन होत, अजाखुर बारिधि बाढ़े॥



तुलसी जेहि के पद पंकज तेँ प्रगटी तटिनी, जो हरै अघ गाढ़े।  
तेँ प्रभु या सरिता तरिबे कहूँ मागत नाव करारे ह्वै ठाढ़े।।5।।

5. nāma ajāmila-sē khala kōṭi apāra nadīm bhava būrata kārḥē.  
jō sumirēm giri mēru silākana hōta, ajākhura bāridhi bārḥē..  
tulasī jēhi kē pada paṅkaja tēm pragaṭi taṭinī, jō harai agha gārḥē.  
tē prabhu yā saritā taribē kahum̐ māgata nāva karārē hvai ṭhārḥē..5..

Verse no. 2/5—Sri Ram's holy name had given salvation to innumerable sinners like Ajamil<sup>1</sup> and had saved them from drowning in the fathomless (deep) river represented by this endless world of transmigration (birth and death). The Lord's holy name is so powerful that by just remembering him, even mountains as large as Sumeru (the golden mountain where the gods are believed to reside in the northern sky) become tiny like pebbles, and a heaving ocean in full tide becomes so small as if it was a tiny (shallow) body of water that can be collected in the groove created by a goat's hooves.

Tulsidas says that he (here referring to Lord Vishnu), from whose feet the holy river Ganges has emerged<sup>2</sup> and who can vanquish or eliminate the greatest of sins, is standing at the bank of the river (Ganges) and requesting the boatman Nishad to take him across.\*

[Note—\*This episode of the boatman washing Lord Ram holy feet before he took the Lord, Sita and Laxman across the river Ganges has been narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 100—to Doha no. 102.

<sup>1</sup>The story of Ajamil—See note of Uttar Kand, verse no. 89.

<sup>2</sup>River Ganges—The detailed story of river Ganges has been narrated in a note of verse no. 145 of Kavitaawali, Uttarkand. In fact, verse nos. 145-147 of Uttarkand are dedicated to honouring the glory of river Ganges.]

एहि घाटें थोरिक दूरि अहै कटि लौं जलु थाह देखाइहौं जू।  
परसैं पगधूरि तरै तरनी, घरनी घर क्यों समुझाइहौं जू।।  
तुलसी अवलंबु न और कछू, लरिका केहि भाँति जिआइहौंजू।  
बरु मारिए मोहि, बिना पग धोएँ हौं नाथ न नाव चढ़ाइहौं जू।।6।।

6. ēhi ghāṭatēm thōrika dūri ahai kaṭi laur̐ jalu thāha dēkhā'ihaur̐ jū.  
parasēm pagadhūri tarai taranī, gharanī ghara kyōm samujhā'ihaur̐ jū..  
tulasī avalambu na aura kachū, larikā kēhi bhāmṭi ji'ā'ihaur̐jū.  
baru māri'ē mōhi, binā paga dhō'ēm̐ haur̐ nātha na nāva caṛhā'ihaur̐ jū..6..

Verse no. 2/6— [The boatman replied]:- 'A little away from this Ghaat (river bank), the water is only hip deep. Come, I'll show you the way (and you can cross the river from that place), but I cannot allow you to board my boat because if, like Ahilya<sup>1</sup>, my wooden boat also finds liberation (i.e. converted into a lady, like Ahilya was converted from stone to a woman), how will I explain it to my wife at home? I do not have any other means of livelihood, so how will I take care of my family? Oh Lord! I will not allow you to board my boat before washing your feet of dust, even if you kill me.'

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line nos. 4-7 that precede Doha no. 100.

<sup>1</sup>Ahilya was the wife of sage Gautam. Due to some misunderstanding the sage had cursed her to become a stone. However, realising that she was not at fault, the sage blessed her that when Lord Vishnu descends upon earth in his incarnation as Lord Ram, he would come to her and touch her with his holy feet. Then at that time she would be freed from this curse and come back to the sage as his wife.

So, while on his way to Janakpur in the company of sage Vishwamitra, Lord Ram was instructed by the sage to liberate Ahilya by placing the dust of his holy feet on the stone slab representing her. She was immediately cured of her curse and resumed her divine form of a lady who was the chaste wife of the exalted sage Gautam. This episode is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 11-12 and Chanda lines 1-6 that precede Doha no. 100.

The story of why Ahilya was cursed is as follows:--

She was the devout and chaste wife of sage Gautam. According to legend, once it so happened that Indra, the lustful king of Gods, fell prey to the beauty of Ahilya, and attempted to outrage her modesty by assuming the form of her husband while the sage had gone out to the river to attend to his daily chores. When the sage returned, Indra tried to escape from the hermitage, but the sage caught him red-handed. So outraged was the sage that he cursed both his chaste wife Ahilya as well as the culprit Indra. He cursed Ahilya that she would become a stone. But when he found out that Indra, the king of Gods, was the real culprit who had deceitfully cheated his wife of her loyalty towards her husband, and that Ahilya was not to be blamed, the sage cursed Indra vehemently. Gautam realised that Indra had been so overcome with a rage of passion that he forgot all senses of ethics, propriety and probity and had assumed the form of the sage to cheat Ahilya. So the sage had then blessed her that when Lord Vishnu incarnated on the earth as Sri Ram, he would visit her place and would touch her with the holy dust of his feet, at which she will be absolved of her sins and her curse, and will resume her original form and come back to heaven. The sage promised her that after her penances and repentance, when she will be purified by Sri Ram's holy feet, he will accept her back as his wife.

Meanwhile, the sage vehemently cursed Indra that his body would be full of holes representing eyes, as he was so lascivious and promiscuous that he could see nothing but a woman's vagina, a virtual 'hole' in the body, with his lustful eyes, which were also equal to a 'hole'. So, let him see whatever he wishes with his whole body, and let the world know about his deformed mentality when it watches him with thousands of holes on his body. As a result, Indra's body became ugly by being perforated with thousands of tiny holes resembling the scars of Chicken Pocks.

The story of Ahilya's liberation is narrated by Goswami Tulsidas in—(a) Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 11 that precedes Doha no. 210—to Doha 211; (b) Geetawali, Baal Kand, verse nos. 57-60; (c) Janki Mangal, verse nos. 39-40; (d) Adhyatma Ramayan of Veda Vyas, Baal Kand, Canto 5, verse nos. 19-61; and (e) Valmiki's Ramayan, Baal Kand, from Sarga/Canto 48, verse nos. 14-33—to Sarga/Canto 49, verse nos. 1-21.]

रावरे दोषु न पायनको, पगधूरिको भूरि प्रभाउ महा है।  
पाहन तैं बन-बाहनु काठको कोमल है, जलु खाइ रहा है॥  
पावन पाय पखारि कै नाव चढ़ाइहों, आयसु होत कहा है।  
तुलसी सुनि केवटके बर बैन हँसे प्रभु जानकी ओर हहा है॥१॥

7. rāvarē dōśu na pāyanakō, pagadhūrikō bhūri prabhā'u mahā hai.  
 pāhana tēm bana-bāhanu kāṭhakō kōmala hai, jalu khā'i rahā hai..  
 pāvana pāya pakhāri kai nāva caṛhā'ihauṁ, āyasu hōta kahā hai.  
 tulasī suni kēvaṭakē bara baina hamśē prabhu jānakī ōra hahā hai..7..

Verse no. 2/7—[The boatman continued—] 'In this (providing salvation), your (Lord Ram's) feet are not at fault. The dust of your feet has immense mystical and spiritual effects (the touch of which converted a stone into lady Ahilya. So, what is the wonder if my wooden boat is also turned into a lady? Because—) Compared to a hard stone (as was the case with Ahilya), this boat is made up of wood, and further, having soaked water, it has become softer. Hence, I can give you a lift in the boat only after washing your feet. So, say, what is your order (or decision) in the matter?'

Tulsidas says that hearing such clever but innocent words of the Kewat (the boatman, words that were innocuous but at the same time a cunning ploy to make his wash the holy feet of the 'Lord of the world', a privilege that was available to none else in the entire story of the Ramayana), Sri Ram glanced at Sita and burst out laughing (at the child-like innocence and simpleton logic of Kewat).

पात भरी सहरी, सकल सुत बारे-बारे,  
 केवटकी जाति, कछु बेद न पढ़ाइहौं ।  
 सबु परिवारु मेरो याहि लागि, राजा जू,  
 हौं दीन बित्तहीन, कैसें दूसरी गढ़ाइहौं ।।  
 गौतमकी घरनी ज्यों तरनी तरैगी मेरी,  
 प्रभुसों निषादु है कै बादु ना बढ़ाइहौं ।  
 तुलसीके ईस राम, रावरे सों साँची कहौं,  
 बिना पग धोएँ नाथ, नाव ना चढ़ाइहौं ।।8।।

8. pāta bharī saharī, sakala suta bārē-bārē,  
 kēvaṭakī jāti, kachu bēda na paṛhā'ihauṁ.  
 sabu parivāru mērō yāhi lāgi, rājā jū,  
 hauṁ dīna bittahīna, kaisēm dūsarī gaṛhā'ihauṁ..  
 gautamakī gharanī jyōm taranī taraigī mērī,  
 prabhusōm nīśādu hvai kai bādu nā baṛhā'ihauṁ.  
 tulasīkē īsa rāma, rāvarē sōm sām'cī kahaum,  
 binā paga dhō'ēm' nātha, nāva nā caṛhā'ihauṁ..8..

Verse no. 2/8—'I don't have anything (to feed my children) at home except fish on leaves (i.e. at meals I have only fish to serve on plate made of leaves); the children are young (i.e. they depend on me and can't earn their independent livelihoods), and since by caste I am a (low-caste) boatman so I can't imagine to teach them the Vedas either (so that they can get some decent employment as a teacher).

Oh King! You must understand that my whole family is dependent on this boat. I am poor, humble and wretched, and I can't afford to get a new boat made (if this old thing vanishes all of a sudden). Like the wife of Gautam, if this wooden boat is also liberated (i.e. turned into a lady), then oh Lord, being a low-caste Nishad, I will not be in a position to argue and quarrel with you.

Oh Lord! Oh Lord of Tulsi! I tell you the truth that I shall not let you step in my boat without first washing your feet.'

जिन्हको पुनीत बारि धारै सिरपै पुरारि,  
 त्रिपथगामिनि जसु बेद कहै गाइकै ।  
 जिन्हको जोगींद्र मुनिबुंद देव देह दमि,  
 करत बिबिध जोग-जप मनु लाइकै ।।  
 तुलसी जिन्हकी धूरि परसि अहल्या तरी,  
 गौतम सिधारे गृह गौनो सो लेवाइकै ।  
 तेई पाय पाइकै चढ़ाइ नाव धोए बिनु,  
 खैहौ न पठावनी कै हैहौ न हँसाइ कै ।।१॥

9. jinhakō punīta bāri dhāraiṁ sirapai purāri,  
 tripathagāmini jasu bēda kahaiṁ gā'ikai.  
 jinhakō jōgīndra munibr̥nda dēva dēha dami,  
 karata bibidha jōga-japa manu lā'ikai..  
 tulasī jinhakī dhūri parasi ahalyā tarī,  
 gautama sidhārē gr̥ha gaunō sō lēvā'ikai.  
 tē'ī pāya pā'ikai carhā'i nāva dhō'ē binu,  
 khvaihaur̥m na paṭhāvanī kai hvaihaur̥m na hamśā'i kai..9..

Verse no. 2/9—'Lord Shiva carries the holy water which washes your feet (i.e. river Ganges) on his head, and even the Vedas sing the glories of that water (of Ganges). Great mystics, sages, hermits and Gods suffer their bodies in order to receive the blessings of this water by doing various types of Yogas (meditative postures) and Japas (repeating Lord's name). Ahilya got salvation at the touch of the dust of your feet, and sage Gautam took her home most willingly like a newly-wed wife—Oh Lord (says Tulsidas), having found that feet, I would not liked to be called a fool (i.e. become a laughing stock for being so foolish, ignorant and idiotic that I let go of this once-in-a-life time golden opportunity of washing your holy feet) and lose my fare (i.e. my god-sent golden opportunity for salvation) by allowing you to board my boat without first washing your feet.'

प्रभुरुख पाइ कै, बोलाइ बालक घरनिहि,  
 बंदि कै चरन चहूँ दिसि बैठे घेरि-घेरि ।  
 छोटे-सो कठौता भरि आनि पानी गंगाजूको,  
 धोइ पाय पीअत पुनीत बारि फेरि-फेरि ।।  
 तुलसी सराहैं ताको भागु, सानुराग सुर  
 बरषैं सुमन, जय-जय कहैं टेरि-टेरि ।  
 बिबिध सनेह-सानी बानी असयानी सुनि,  
 हँसैं राघौ जानकी-लखन तन हेरि-हेरि ।।१०॥

10. prabhurukha pā'i kai, bōlā'i bālaka gharanihi,  
 bandi kai carana cahūṁṁ disi baiṭhē ghēri-ghēri.  
 chōṭō-sō kaṭhautā bhari āni pānī gaṅgājūkō,  
 dhō'i pāya pī'ata punīta bāri phēri-phēri..  
 tulasī sarāhaiṁ tākō bhāgu, sānurāga sura  
 baraśaiṁ sumana, jaya-jaya kahaiṁ ṭēri-ṭēri.  
 bibidha sanēha-sānī bānī asayānī suni,  
 hamśaiṁ rāghau jānakī-lakhana tana hēri-hēri..10..

Verse no. 2/10—Seeing Sri Ram's intentions (that he wants to board the boat and will allow him to wash his feet), the boatman summoned his son and wife. All of them worshipped the holy feet of Sri Ram and sat down in a circle around him. Then they brought the water of the river Ganges in a small wooden bowl, washed Sri Ram's feet and repeatedly drank the water one by one.

Tulsidas says that the Gods began to praise the good fortunes (luck) of Kewat, showered flowers on him with affection and chanted his remarkable luck and glories in chorus. Hearing the various innocent chatter and small-talk of Kewat's family, Sri Ram often glanced towards Sita and Laxman, and smiled.

[Note—The same idea is expressed in Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Doha no. 101.]

### En-route to the Forest

पुरतें निकसी रघुबीरबधू धरि धीर दए मगमें डग द्वै ।  
झलकी भरि भाल कनी जलकी, पुट सूखि गए मधुराधर वै ।।  
फिरि बूझति हैं, चलनो अब केतिक, पर्नकुटी करिहो कित है ?  
तियकी लखि आतुरता पियकी अँखियाँ अति चारु चली जल चै ।।११।।

11. puratēm nikasī raghubīrabadhū dhari dhīra da'e magamēm ḍaga dvai.  
jhalakīm bhari bhāla kanīm jalakī, puṭa sūkhi ga'e madhurādhara vai..  
phiri būjhati haiṁ, calanō aba kētika, parnakutī karihau kita hvai?  
tiyakī lakhi āturatā piyakī am̐khiyām̐ ati cāru calīm jala cvai..11..

Verse no. 2/11—When Sita left the outskirts (outer periphery) of the city of Ayodhya, she braced herself (for the onward journey on foot) and took a few steps on the (rough) road. Immediately, due to her delicate constitution (and because she was unaccustomed to hardships), sweat drops emerged on her fore-head and both the lips became parched (dried, due to thirst). She turned towards Lord Ram and asked, 'Oh dear! How far have we still to go, and where will you erect a hut?'

Seeing his dear wife's distress and anxiety, her eagerness to soon find a place to rest, and her un-easiness at having to walk barefoot on the rough road, the lover's (Lord Ram's) eyes welled-up with tears, which rolled down his cheeks.

[Note—Refer: Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse no. 13.]

जलको गए लखनु, हैं लरिका  
परिखौ, पिय! छाहँ घरीक है ठाढ़े ।  
पोंछि पसेउ बयारि करौ,  
अरु पाय पखारिहौ भूभुरि-डाढ़े ।।  
तुलसी रघुबीर प्रियाश्रम जानि कै  
बैठि बिलंब लौ कंटक काढ़े ।  
जानकी नाहको नेहु लख्यो,  
पुलको तनु, बारि बिलोचन बाढ़े ।।१२।।

12. jalakō ga'e lakkhanu, haiṁ larikā  
parikhau, piya! chāham̐ gharīka hvai ṭhāṛhē.  
pōnchi pasē'u bayāri karaum̐,  
aru pāya pakhārihauṁ bhūbhuri-ḍāṛhē..  
tulasī raghubīra priyāśrama jāni kai

baiṭhi bilamba laurṁ kaṇṭaka kārḥē.  
jānakīrṁ nāhakō nēhu lakhyō,  
pulaḥkō tanu, bāri bilōcana bārḥē..12..

Verse no. 2/12—Sita says affectionately to Lord Ram, ‘Dear, Laxman is a boy (still a child). He has gone to fetch water, so wait for him for some time under some shade somewhere. I shall wipe your sweat, fan you and wash your feet, which have been burnt (scorched) by the hot sand.’<sup>1</sup>

Realising that Sita was tired, Lord Ram sat down and plucked the thorns from her feet for some time. When Sita saw her beloved’s affection for her, she was overwhelmed with emotions, was thrilled, and tears welled-up in her eyes too.

[Note—Refer: (i) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse no. 6; and (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-6 that precede Doha no. 67.]

ठाढ़े हैं नवदुमडार गहें,  
धनु काँधें धरें, कर सायकु लै ।  
बिकटी भृकुटी, बड़री अँखियाँ,  
अनमोल कपोलन की छबि है ॥  
तुलसी अस मूरति आनु हिउँ,  
जड ! डारु धौँ प्रान निछावरि कै ।  
श्रमसीकर साँवरि देह लसै,  
मनो रासि महा तम तारकमै ॥13॥

13. ṭhārḥē haiṁ navadrumaḍāra gahēm,  
dhanu kāmḍhēm dharēm, kara sāyaku lai.  
bikaṭi bhr̥kuṭi, baṛarī am̐khiyām̐,  
anamōla kapōlana kī chabi hai..  
tulasī asa mūrati ānu hi'ēm̐,  
jaḍa! ḍāru dhaurṁ prāna nichāvari kai.  
śramasīkara sām̐vari dēha lasai,  
manō rāsi mahā tama tārakamai..13..

Verse no. 2/13—Lord Ram is standing, leaning against or holding some new branch of some tree. He has a bow slung across his shoulder and an arrow in his hand. His eye-brows are curved, eyes are large and the cheeks are pink in their glow. The dark complexioned body, with glistening sweat-drops, looks glorious like a the dark sky of the night that is adorned by constellations of sparkling stars.

Tulsidas addresses himself and says, ‘Oh you dumb fellow! Give abode to such an image of the Lord in your heart even at the cost of sacrificing your life (i.e. you are as good as dead if you aren't enchanted with, captivated with and thrilled at such an adorable, such a beautiful and such a fascinating image of the Lord).’

[Note—Refer: Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse no. 15.]

जलजनयन, जलजानन जटा है सिर,  
जौबन-उमंग अंग उदित उदार हैं ।  
साँवरे-गोरेके बीच भामिनी सुदामिनी-सी,  
मुनिपट धारें, उर फूलनिके हार हैं ॥  
करनि सरासन सिलीमुख, निषंग कटि,

अति ही अनूप काहू भूपके कुमार हैं ।  
तुलसी बिलोकि कै तिलोकके तिलक तीनि  
रहे नरनारि ज्यों चितेरे चित्रसार हैं ॥14॥

14. jalajanayana, jalajānana jaṭā hai sira,  
jaubana-umaṅga aṅga uḍita udāra haiṁ.  
sām̐varē-gōrēkē bīca bhāminī sudāminī-sī,  
munipaṭa dhāraiṁ, ura phūlanikē hāra haiṁ..  
karani sarāsana silīmukha, niśaṅga kaṭi,  
ati hī anūpa kāhū bhūpakē kumāra haiṁ.  
tulasī bilōki kai tilōkakē tilaka tīni  
rahē naranāri jyōm citērē citrasāra haiṁ..14..

Verse no. 2/14—[The villagers residing in the wayside villages talk with each other in hushed tones on seeing Sri Ram, Laxman and Sita]:- ‘Their eyes and faces are like lotus. Their hairs are matted on their heads, and their bodies are radiant with youthfulness. A beautiful woman, whose countenance resembles the dazzle and radiance of lightening, looks beauteous between the dark complexioned one (Lord Ram) and the fair one (Laxman). These three are attired like hermits, and have a garland of flowers over their chests. With bow and arrow in their hands and quiver tied around their waists, they appear to be princes of some king, princes so handsome and beautiful and peerless that the likes of them have never been seen before.

Tulsidas says that on seeing the three ‘Tilaks’ of the three Lokas, the men and women of the wayside villages were stunned and rendered immobile as if they were portraits or part of a painting.

[The word ‘Tilak’ literally refers to an auspicious and ceremonial mark put on the forehead. It also means someone who is eminent, most prominent, foremost, most honourable and exalted. The three Lokas refer to the three worlds such as the subterranean, terrestrial, celestial worlds. Hence, the meaning of this stanza is that Lord Ram, Sita and Laxman are so wonderful to look at that they stand out in the whole creation as the most exalted ones.]

[Note—The conversation of the villagers and travelers who met Lord Ram on his way to the forest along with Sita and Laxman has been well documented by Tulsidas in—

(i) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse nos. 16—42; and (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 110—to Doha no. 122.]

आगेँ सोहै साँवरो कुँवरु गोरो पाछेँ-पाछेँ,  
आछे मुनिबेष धरें, लाजत अनंग हैं ।  
बान बिसिषासन, बसन बनही के कटि  
कसे हैं बनाइ, नीके राजत निषंग हैं ॥  
साथ निसिनाथमुखी पाथनाथनंदिनी-सी,  
तुलसी बिलोकें चितु लाइ लेत संग हैं ।  
आनँद उमंग मन, जौबन-उमंग तन,  
रूपकी उमंग उमगत अंग-अंग हैं ॥15॥

15. āgēm sōhai sām̐varō kum̐varu gōrō pāchēm-pāchēm,  
āchē munibēśa dharēm, lājata anaṅga haiṁ.

bāna bisīāsana, basana banahī kē kaṭi  
 kasē hair̥m banā'i, nīkē rājata nīsaṅga hair̥m..  
 sātha nisināthamukhī pāthanāthanandinī-sī,  
 tulasī bilōkēm citu lā'i lēta saṅga hair̥m.  
 ānamāda umaṅga mana, jaubana-umaṅga tana,  
 rūpakī umaṅga umagata aṅga-aṅga hair̥m..15..

Verse no. 2/15—The dark-complexioned prince walks in the front, and the fair-skinned one comes in the rear—both of them are dressed like a hermit and appear adorable and glorious; even Kamdeo himself feels inferior as compared to their beauty. They have a bow and arrow, and are adorned in clothes suitable for the forest. Beautiful quivers are tied around their waists. They are accompanied by a moon-faced woman who is like Goddess Laxmi, the daughter of the ocean, herself personified<sup>1</sup>.

Tulsidas says that on seeing them, one gets automatically attracted towards them, and his heart and mind accompanies them wherever they go, such is their magnetic personality. Their hearts are full of joy, their bodies are radiant with youthful energy, and beauty seems to sprout (effuse) from each of their body-parts.

[Note—Refer: (i) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Doha no. 123 and its preceding Chaupai line nos. 1-8; (ii) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse nos. 18—19.]

सुन्दर बदन, सरसीरुह सुहाए नैन,  
 मंजुल प्रसून मार्ये मुकुट जटनि के।  
 अंसनि सरासन, लसत सुचि सर कर,  
 तून कटि मुनिपट लूटक पटनि के॥  
 नारि सुकुमारि संग, जाके अंग उबटि कै,  
 बिधि बिरचै बरुथ बिद्युतछटनि के।  
 गोरेको बरनु देखें सोनो न सलोनो लागै,  
 साँवरे बिलोकें गर्ब घटत घटनि के॥16॥

16. sundara badana, sarasīruha suhā'ē naina,  
 mañjula prasūna māthēm mukuṭa jaṭani kē.  
 ansani sarāsana, lasata suci sara kara,  
 tūna kaṭi munipaṭa lūṭaka paṭani kē..  
 nāri sukumāri saṅga, jākē aṅga ubaṭi kai,  
 bidhi biracair̥m barūtha bidyutachaṭani kē.  
 gōrēkō baranu dēkhēm sōnō na salōnō lāgai,  
 sāmvarē bilōkēm garba ghaṭata ghaṭani kē..16..

Verse no. 2/16—They have beauteous faces, their eyes are like lotus, and their heads have crowns of matted hairs with beautiful flowers tucked in them. The bow is strung across their shoulders, hands hold beautiful arrows, and quivers and hermit-like clothes, which are more glamorous than ordinary clothes, are wrapped around their waists. They are accompanied by a gentle and tender lady. The creator Brahma had created the group of sparklers (i.e. stars) by the residue that was left by rubbing 'Ubatan' (a concoction of powdered gram mixed with honey and milk that is rubbed on the body to clean the skin) on her (Sita's) divine body. On seeing the fair complexion of Laxman, gold loses its sheen, while seeing the dark-complexioned prince (Ram), even the dark rain-bearing clouds feel inferior or ashamed.



[Note—Refer: (i) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse no. 19; and (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Doha no. 115 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 4-8.]

बलकल-बसन, धनु-बान पानि, तून कटि,  
 रूपके निधान घन-दामिनी-बरन हैं ।  
 तुलसी सुतीय संग, सहज सुहाए अंग,  
 नवल कँवलहू तें कोमल चरन हैं ॥  
 औरै सो बसंतु, और रति, औरै रतिपति,  
 मूरति बिलोकें तन-मनके हरन हैं ।  
 तापस बेषे बनाइ पथिक पथें सुहाइ,  
 चले लोकलोचननि सुफल करन हैं ॥17॥

17. balakala-basana, dhanu-bāna pāni, tūna kaṭi,  
 rūpakē nidhāna ghana-dāminī-barana haim.  
 tulasī sutīya saṅga, sahaja suhā'ē aṅga,  
 navala kam'valahū tēm kōmala carana haim..  
 aurai sō basantu, aura rati, aurai ratipati,  
 mūrati bilōkēm tana-manakē harana haim.  
 tāpasa bēśai banā'i pathika pathēm suhā'i,  
 calē lōkalōcanani suphala karana haim..17..

Verse no. 2/17—Wearing clothes made of leaves (and other tree-parts such as bark), having bow and arrow in their hands and quiver tied around their waist, the two princes appear to be a treasure-house of exceptional and bewitching beauty, and have complexions resembling dark cloud and lightening (i.e. dark and fair) respectively. [The dark prince is Lord Ram, and the fair prince is Laxman.]

Accompanying them is a beautiful lady whose body is naturally beautiful and glamorous, and her feet are more tender/soft than a new lotus flower. It appears that Laxman is a second (i.e. a parallel, a duplicate) Basant (the spring season), Sita is a Rati (wife of Kamdeo, the patron God of love, cupid and passion), and Lord Ram is Kamdeo himself. Their enchanting image (i.e. vision, view, sight) is so fabulous and attractive that it appears to steal one's mind and body (i.e. one becomes so enthralled and enamoured at the sight that one tends to forget about one's surroundings and awareness of his own body). It appears that these three (the spring season, Rati and Kamdeo) have taken the form of a hermit couple, and have taken to the road to give the wayside residents of the villages and hamlets the fruits of their eyes (i.e. to enable them to enjoy a most magnificent and beautiful sight which they will cherish for a life-time).

[Note—Refer: (i) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Doha no. 123 and its preceding Chaupai line nos. 1-8; (ii) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse nos. 18—19, 21, 24—26, 29 etc. ]

बनिता बनी स्यामल गौरके बीच,  
 बिलोकहु, री सखि! मोहि-सी है ।  
 मगजोगु न कोमल, क्यों चलिहै,  
 सकुचाति महि पदपंकज छवै ॥  
 तुलसी सुनि ग्रामबधू बिथकी,  
 पुलकी तन, औ चले लोचन चै ।  
 सब भाँति मनोहर मोहनरूप

अनूप हैं भूपके बालक द्वै । 118 ।।

18. banitā banī syāmala gaurakē bīca,  
bilōkahu, rī sakhi! mōhi-sī hvai.  
magajōgu na kōmala, kyōm calihai,  
sakucāti mahi padapaṅkaja chvai..  
tulasī suni grāmabadhū bithakīm,  
pulakīm tana, au calē lōcana cvai.  
saba bhāmṭi manōhara mōhanarūpa  
anūpa haiṁ bhūpakē bālaka dvai..18..

Verse no. 2/18—[One village woman says to another]:- ‘Oh friend! Between the dark and the fair complexioned princes, there is a lady. Watch her a little, the way I behold her. She is very delicate and tender, and most unsuitable to walk on the road. I wonder how she will walk (all the way to her destination).

Well, (it appears that) the earth feels shy at the touch of her soft feet! [This is because the ground is hard compared to the soles of Sita’s feet, and the earth is ashamed at its harshness that causes so much discomfort and pain to Sita]!’

Tulsidas says that hearing her, all other women-folk of the village became pensive, full of regret, distraught and sombre; their bodies became thrilled and tears rolled down their eyes. [All of them started saying—] ‘These two princes are attractive by all counts, and peerlessly beautiful.’

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 110; Chaupai line nos. 5-6 that precede Doha no. 112; and from Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 119—to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 121.]

साँवरे-गोरे सलोने सुभायँ, मनोहरताँ जिति मैनु लियो है।  
बान-कमान, निषंग कसैं, सिर सोहैं जटा, मुनिबेषु कियो है।।  
संग लिउँ बिधुबैनी बधू, रतिको जेहि रंचक रूपु दियो है।  
पायन तौ पनहीं न, पयादेहि क्यों चलिहैं, सकुचात हियो है। 119 ।।

19. sāmvarē-gōrē salōnē subhāyam, manōharatām jiti mainu liyō hai.  
bāna-kamāna, niśaṅga kasēm, sira sōhairṁ jaṭā, munibēśu kiyō hai..  
saṅga li’ēm bidhubainī badhū, ratikō jēhi raṅcaka rūpu diyō hai.  
pāyana tau panahīm na, payādēhi kyōm calihairṁ, sakucāta hiyō hai..19..

Verse no. 2/19—‘These two dark and fair complexioned princes are naturally handsome, and (it appears that) they have won Kamdeo (the patron God of beauty and glamour) in as far as beauty is concerned. They have a bow and arrow (in their hands) and a quiver (tied around their waists), matted hairs adorn their heads, and they are attired like a hermit. They have a lady with them, whose body is (glamorous) like a moon and (it appears that) she has given a part (or fraction) of her beauty to Rati (consort of Kamdeo). On seeing them one’s heart feels hesitant (reluctant, sorry, pitiful), wondering that since they do not have even a proper pair of foot-wear to wear, how will they walk (on the hard ground)<sup>1</sup>?’

[Note—Lord Ram and others walking barefoot—Refer: (i) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse no. 25, stanza 2; verse no. 27, stanza 3; verse no. 30, stanza 3; verse no.

34, stanza 3 which also describe the Lord walking bare foot; and (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line nos. 2-4 that precede Doha no. 121; and more specifically Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 119.]

रानी में जानी अयानी महा, पबि-पाहनहू तें कठोर हियो है।  
 राजहुँ काजु अकाजु न जान्यो, कह्यो तियको जेहिं कान कियो है॥  
 ऐसी मनोहर मूरति ए, बिछुरें कैसे प्रीतम लोगु जियो है।  
 आँखिनमें सखि! राखिबे जोगु, इन्हें किमि कै बनबासु दियो है॥20॥

20. rānī maim jānī ayānī mahā, pabi-pāhanahū tēm kaṭhōra hiyō hai.  
 rājahum' kāju akāju na jān'yō, kahyō tiyakō jēhim kāna kiyō hai..  
 aisī manōhara mūrati ē, bichurēm kaisē prītama lōgu jiyō hai.  
 ām'khinamēm sakhi! rākhibē jōgu, inhairm kimi kai banabāsu diyō hai..20..

Verse no. 2/20—‘I have realised (or have come to the conclusion) that the queen (who sent them to exile) is a great fool; her heart is harder than stone or Vajra (the weapon of Indra which is considered the hardest material in existence). The king also forgot what was right or wrong, for he lent his ears to a woman<sup>1</sup>.

Oh! Their image is so enchanting and captivating for the mind, the mind is so much in thrall of their sight that one wonders how their kin and dear ones survive in their absence? Oh friends! They are worthy of being kept constantly within sight. We wonder why then have they been sent to exile?<sup>2</sup>

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer: Ram Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 110.

<sup>2</sup>Refer: Ram Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 121.]

सीस जटा, उर-बाहु बिसाल, बिलोचन लाल, तिरीछी-सी भौंहें।  
 तून सरासन-बान धरें तुलसी बन-मारगमें सुठि सोहैं॥  
 सादर बारहिं बार सुभायँ चितै तुम्ह त्यों हमरो मनु मोहैं।  
 पूँछत ग्रामबधू सिय सों, कहौ, साँवरे-से सखि! रावरे को हैं॥21॥

21. sīsa jaṭā, ura-bāhu bisāla, bilōcana lāla, tirīchī-sī bhaunhairm.  
 tūna sarāsana-bāna dharēm tulasī bana-māragamēm suṭhi sōhairm..  
 sādara bārahirn bāra subhāyam' citai tumha tyōm hamarō manu mōhairm.  
 pūm'chata grāmabadhū siya sōm, kahau, sām'varē-sē sakhi! rāvarē kō  
 hairm..21..

Verse no. 2/21—Tulsidas says that Sita is asked by the village women-folk—‘He, who has matted hairs on his head, whose chest and arms are broad, eyes are red-coloured (like the colour of the rising sun at dawn) and eyebrows are curved, who appears so innocent and gentle on the forest path though he holds a bow, an arrow and a quiver, and who glances repeatedly and affectionately towards you, the whole sight being so enchanting that it attracts our minds and rivets our attention on him—say, oh dear friend, how is that dark-complexioned youth related to you? [The obvious reference is to Lord Ram.]’

[Note—The conversation between Sita and village women has been narrated in Ram Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 116—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 118.]

सुनि सुंदर बैन सुधारस-साने सयानी हैं जानकी जानी भली ।  
तिरछे करि नैन, दै सैन तिन्हें समुझाइ कछु, मुसुकाइ चली ।।  
तुलसी तेहि औसर सोहैं सबै अवलोकति लोचनलाहु अली ।  
अनुराग-तड़ागमें भानु उड़ैं बिगसी मनो मंजुल कंजकली ।।22 ।।

22. suni sundara baina sudhārāsa-sānē sayānī hairī jānakī jānī bhalī.  
tirachē kari naina, dai saina tinhairī samujhā'i kachū, musukā'i calī..  
tulasī tēhi ausara sōhairī sabai avalōkati lōcanalāhu alī.  
anurāga-tarāgamēm bhānu udairī bigasī manō manjula kanjakalī..22..

Verse no. 2/22—On hearing the sweet-as-nectar words of village women, Sita understood that they were very clever. Therefore, (instead of speaking and replying directly to them) she blushed and gestured to them with a shy look on her face, glancing towards Sri Ram with slanting eyes (to explain the relationship), then smiled and moved on. [By her gestures Sita told the women that the youth they were referring to was her dear husband.]

Tulsidas says that at that moment, the sight of those women watching Lord Ram to the contentment of their eyes (i.e. to their heart's content) appears as magnificent as the blossoming of the lotus buds into full flowers in the pond of love at the sight of the rising sun.

धरि धीर कहैं, चलु, देखिअ जाइ, जहाँ सजनी! रजनी रहिहैं ।  
कहिहैं जगु पोच, न सोचु कछु, फलु लोचन आपन तौ लहिहैं ।।  
सुखु पाइहैं कान सुने बतियाँ कल, आपुसमें कछु पै कहिहैं ।  
तुलसी अति प्रेम लगी पलकैं, पुलकी लखि रामु हिए महि हैं ।।23 ।।

23. dhari dhīra kahairī, calu, dēkhi'a jā'i, jahām' sajanī! rajanī rahihairī.  
kahihei jagu pōca, na sōcu kachū, phalu lōcana āpana tau lahihairī..  
sukhu pā'ihairī kāna sunē batiyām' kala, āpusamēm kachu pai kahihairī.  
tulasī ati prēma lagī palakairī, pulakī lakhi rāmu hi'ē mahi hairī..23..

Verse no. 2/23—Those women folk gathered courage and fortitude, and said to each other wistfully, 'Oh gentle friend! Come, let's go and see the place where they would spend the night. Even if the world accuses us of ulterior motives (i.e. cast aspersions on our character), it doesn't really matter. Our eyes will get their benefit, and the ears will feel happy hearing their sweet talk, for they would surely talk with each other (even if they don't talk with us).'

Tulsidas says that their eyes shut close due to intense (devotionally pure) love, and they were thrilled at 'seeing' the image of Lord Ram in their hearts. [By closing the eyes, they had literally shut the image of Lord Ram in their hearts.]

पद कोमल, स्यामल-गौर कलेवर राजत कोटि मनोज लजाएँ ।

कर बान-सरासन, सीस जटा, सरसीरुह-लोचन सोन सुहाएँ ।।  
जिन्ह देखे सखी! सतिभायहु तैं तुलसी तिन्ह तौ मन फेरि न पाए ।  
एहिं मारग आजु किसोर बधू बिधुबैनी समेत सुभायँ सिधाए ।।24 ।।

24. pada kōmala, syāmala-gaura kalēvara rājata kōṭi manōja lajā'ēm̃.  
kara bāna-sarāsana, sīsa jaṭā, sarasīruha-lōcana sōna suhā'ēm̃..  
jinha dēkhē sakhī! satibhāyahu tēm̃ tulasī tinha tau mana phēri na pā'ē.  
ēhim̃ mārāga āju kisōra badhū bidhubainī samēta subhāyam̃ sidhā'ē..24..

Verse no. 2/24—[Those who were fortunate to see the magnificent and enchanting sight of Lord Ram, Sita and Laxman pass through the village road told other women who have not had the chance to see the beautiful once-in-a-lifetime sight—] ‘Oh friend! Today, two youths had gone this way, and they were accompanied by a lady who was as beautiful as the moon. Their feet were very soft, tender and delicate, and their dark and fair complexions looked glamorous as if putting to shame crores (millions) of Kamdeos. They had bow and arrow in their hands; their heads had matted hairs, and their magnificent and glorious eyes were like red-coloured lotus. Those who even glanced at them were so enamoured and enthralled at the sight that they could not divert their attention from them (i.e. they were virtually transfixed at their magnificent sight and their eyes were literally riveted to them).’

[Note—Refer: (i) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse no. 35; and (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Doha no. 121 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 6-8.]

मुखपंकज, कंजबिलोचन मंजु, मनोज-सरासन-सी बनीं भौं हैं ।  
कमनीय कलेवर कोमल स्यामल-गौर किसोर, जटा सिर सो हैं ।।  
तुलसी कटि तून, धरें धनु बान, अचानक दिष्टि परी तिरछौ हैं ।  
केहि भाँति कहौं सजनी! तोहि सों मृदु मूरति द्वै निवसीं मन मो हैं ।।25 ।।

25. mukhapaṅkaja, kaṅjabilōcana maṅju, manōja-sarāsana-sī banīm̃  
bhauhairm̃.  
kamaṇīya kalēvara kōmala syāmala-gaura kisōra, jaṭā sira sōhairm̃..  
tulasī kaṭi tūna, dharēm̃ dhanu bāna, acānaka diṣṭi parī tirachauhairm̃.  
kēhi bhām̃ṭi kahaurm̃ sajanī! tōhi sōm̃ mṛdu mūrati dvai nivasīm̃ mana  
mōhairm̃..25..

Verse no. 2/25—‘Their faces and eyes were beautiful like the lotus, and the eyebrows were curved like the bow of Kamdeo. They had most handsome and tender bodies of dark and fair complexion respectively. They were youthful, their heads were adorned with matted hairs, a quiver was tied around their waists, and they had a bow and arrow in their hands. Oh friend! From the moment they suddenly glanced at me, how can I tell you, those two beautiful images (of Ram and Laxman) have found their abode in my heart, and they have completely taken over my mind and sub-conscious so much so that I am held in trance and am unable to shake their enchanting and captivating image off my memory.’

Lord Rām hunts in the forest

प्रेम सों पीछें तिरीछें प्रियाहि चितै चितु दै चले लै चितु चोरै ।  
 स्याम सरीर पसेउ लसै हुलसै 'तुलसी' छबि सो मन मोरै ॥  
 लोचन लोल, चलै भृकुटी कल काम कमानहु सो वृनु तोरै ।  
 राजत रामु कुरंगके संग निषंगु कसे धनुसो सरु जोरै ॥26॥

26. prēma sōm pīchēm tirīchēm priyāhi citai citu dai calē lai citu cōraim.  
 syāma sarīra pasē'u lasai hulasai 'tulasī' chabi sō mana mōraim..  
 lōcana lōla, calaim bhr̥kuṭī kala kāma kamānahu sō tr̥nu tōraim.  
 rājata rāmu kuraṅgakē saṅga niṣaṅgu kasē dhanusōm saru jōraim..26..

Verse no. 2/26—He (Sri Ram) glanced back affectionately and unwinkingly towards his beloved (wife, Sita), stole her mind (i.e. his glances infused courage and confidence in Sita's heart and consoled her that she needn't worry as long as the Lord is with her), and then he went out to hunt.

Tulsidas says that sweat-drops look magnificent as they glistened on the dark complexion of Sri Ram. This image creates thrill (a devotional, pure, exhilarating experience) in my (Tulsidas') heart.

The Lord's eyes are shifting rapidly and the eye-brows flickering to coincide with the movement of the eyes (as the Lord moves ahead in the forest in search of the hunt). Watching this sight, even the bow of Kamdeo (the god of beauty and love) feels shy so much so that it symbolically breaks or fiddles with a blade of grass to hide its shame. In this manner, Sri Ram appears very magnificent, running behind the deer with the quiver tied around his waist and the arrow mounted on the bow.

सर चारिक चारु बनाइ कसैं कटि, पानि सरासनु सायकु लै ।  
 बन खेलत रामु फिरै कृगया, 'तुलसी' छबि सो बरनै किमि कै ॥  
 अवलोकि अलौकिक रूपु मृगी मृग चौकि चकैं, चितवैं चितु दै ।  
 न डगैं, न भगैं जियैं जानि सिलीमुख पंच धरैं रति नायकु है ॥27॥

27. sara cārika cāru banā'i kasēm kaṭi, pāni sarāsanu sāyaku lai.  
 bana khēlata rāmu phiraim krgayā, 'tulasī' chabi sō baranai kimi kai..  
 avalōki alaukika rūpu mrgīm mrga cauṅki cakaim, citavaim citu dai.  
 na ḍagaim, na bhagaim jiyam̐ jāni silīmukha pañca dharaim rati nāyaku  
 hai..27..

Verse no. 2/27—Sri Ram hunts around the forest playfully (like a sport). He has stuck 2-4 arrows skillfully around his waist (in a quiver tied around it) and carries a bow and arrow in his hands.

Tulsidas wonders how to describe that beautifully magnificent and captivating scene. Both the male and female deer are startled and astonished at the Lord's out-of-the-world beauty, and stare at him enthralled and enchanted. Thinking that Sri Ram is a personification of Kamdeo himself, the deer-couple stand transfixed—they neither move, nor run away.

[Note—A pertinent question arises: did Lord Ram hurt this deer couple? By all means the unequivocal answer is 'no'. The Lord was very merciful and compassionate by his inherent nature. Besides this, he was not an ordinary human prince, but the Supreme Being in this form having to come down to earth for a variety of reasons. One amongst these reasons was that the Lord wanted his simple devotees who had no spiritual ability to access the Lord by practicing any high-sounding means as prescribed in the scriptures, such as doing penances, austerities, meditation,

contemplation and so many other religious deeds, to have a simple and down-to-earth chance to see the Lord at close quarters and thereby feel fulfilled. Every living being has an Atma that yearns for Mukti (liberation and deliverance) from the gross body in which it is trapped due to the combined effect of its past deeds. Thus, some become an animal and others humans. Now it is obvious that animals such as this deer-couple can't do Tapa or Yoga. So the merciful Lord wished to give them and all of their likes a chance to salvation.

Only those animals whose Atma or soul was pure and devoted to the Lord, who had to become an animal due to certain circumstances but were noble and devoted in their inner hearts, were able to stand before the Lord fearlessly, knowing that the Lord won't harm them. It were the evil and sinful animals who ran away from the Lord when they saw him just like the demons who fled when they saw the Lord. This has been clearly stated by Lord Ram himself when the demon Khar-Dushan came to attack him—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 19.

Even amongst the demons there were some who came to face the Lord fearlessly. A shining example is Vibhishan, the brother of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. Then there were demons who came to the Lord to face him and were instantly delivered from their evil bodies when the Lord slayed them and freed their souls. Examples abound in the Ramayan, the famous ones being Ravana and Kumbhakaran. So, if and whenever the Lord killed any animal it was for the spiritual benefit of the creature as it got instant salvation. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 205.]

बिंधिके बासी उदासी तपी ब्रतधारी महा बिनु नारि दुखारे।  
गौतमतीय तरी 'तुलसी' सो कथा सुनि भे मुनिबृंद सुखारे॥  
हैं सिला सब चंदमुखीं परसें पद मंजुल कंज तिहारे।  
कीन्हीं भली रघुनायकजू! करुना करि काननको पगु धारे॥२८॥

28. bindhikē bāsī udāsī tapī bratadhārī mahā binu nāri dukhārē.  
gautamatiya tarī 'tulasī' sō kathā suni bhē munibr̥ṇḍa sukhārē..  
hvaihair̥m silā saba candamukhīm parasēm pada maṇjula kaṇja tihārē.  
kīnhīm bhalī raghunāyakajū! karunā kari kānanakō pagu dhārē..28..

Verse no. 2/28—The great hermits and ascetics (who had renounced their households and related comforts, and had opted instead for an austere life of penances and hardship) residing on the Vindhya mountain were unhappy at the absence of women in their hermitages. Those hermits and sages were glad to hear the news that the wife of sage Gautam, named Ahilya, was liberated because of them (Ram and Laxman), and therefore said to Sri Ram, 'Now, all the stones around this place would be converted into women at the touch of your feet. Oh the great son of king Raghu's race (i.e. Ram)! You had done the right thing that you visited the forest.'

[Note:- This is a very sarcastic verse. Tulsidas has exposed the pseudo-renouncers and hermits of Kaliyug who pretend to have renounced the world but have not been able to conquer their inner lust and passion. The hermits thanked Lord Ram for his visit to the forest because it may happen that many of the stones and rocks on the way would automatically be converted to ladies by the touch of Lord's holy feet, and this will help the lonely hermits to have company of women. These people had gone to the forest to do Tapa and Yoga, but their hearts still remembered their households and family life. One thing is clearly obvious here—that the main reason why so many

hermits and ascetics did not get Mukti (liberation and deliverance) inspite of leaving their homes and pretending to be leading the life of austerity and penance is that this was done forcefully to meet the expectations of the society which praises people who spend their later years in religious activities. If they had their choice these people would have continued to enjoy the comforts and pleasures of the home instead of forcing the forest upon themselves. They came to the forest just to avoid scorn and criticism in the society.

So, when they heard that Lord Ram had come to the forest and that a stone was converted to the lady named Ahilya, the wife of sage Gautam, by the touch of the Lord's feet, they felt happy that surely some of the stones in the forest would be transformed into women whom they will keep for company because such women won't be accepted by their families any longer.

This observation answers a very important question: why did Lord Ram not visit each and every hermit or sage who lived in the forest, even along the path he walked on, and why did he often went out of his way, even selectively, to go and visit certain sages and hermits though they were far out of his way? The Lord avoided the sort of false sage or hermit as described in the aforesaid verse, and he deligently went to meet those who were sincere and worthy of his visit.]

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## Aranyakāṇḍa

पंचवटी बर पर्नकुटी तर बैठे हैं राम सुभायँ सुहाए ।  
सोहै प्रिया, प्रिय बंधु लसै, 'तुलसी' सब अंग घने छबि छाए ॥  
देखि मृगा मृगनैनी कहे प्रिय बैन, ते प्रीतमके मन भाए ।  
हेमकुरंगके संग सरासनु सायकु लै रघुनायकु धाए ॥१॥

1. pañcabaṭīm bara parnakutī tara baiṭhē hairaṁ rāmu subhāyam̐ suhā'ē.  
sōhai priyā, priya bandhu lasai, 'tulasi' saba aṅga ghanē chabi chā'ē..  
dēkhi mrgā mrganainī kahē priya baina, tē prītamakē mana bhā'ē.  
hēmakuraṅgakē saṅga sarāsanu sāyaku lai raghunāyaku dhā'ē..1..

Verse no. 3/1—Lord Ram is sitting near the hut in Panchvati along with Sita and Laxman. Tulsidas says that the three look extremely beautiful and enchanting (1).

Seeing a golden deer (a fawn), Sita asked Lord Ram to go and fetch it for her. Then, Lord Ram picked up his bow and arrow and rushed towards that deer<sup>1</sup> (2).

[Note—It ought to be noted here that this Chapter called 'Aranya Kand' has been summed up by Tulsidas in merely a single verse in Kavitawali. This Chapter actually deals with the events in the life of Lord Ram after he left Chitrakoot with Sita and Laxman and entered the deeper part of the forest, which is called 'Aranya', which was very dense and far away from civilisation. It was here that the majority of hermits and sages lived in secluded hermitages in pursuit of their spiritual goals, doing penances, austerity, meditation and contemplation and undertaking all other such activities as prescribed in the scriptures. Here Lord Ram had met some of the greatest sages of their times, such as Atri and his wife Anusuiya, Sharbhanga, Agastya. This part of the forest was infested with ferocious demons and they had been killing the resident sages with impunity over a long period of time so much so that a huge mountain of their bones was formed. {Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 9 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 6-8.}

It was during this journey through the forest that the demon Viradh was liberated and the Lord had befriended the vulture Jatayu.

After leaving Chitrakoot, the next hermitage where Lord Ram stayed for some time was located deep in this forbidden part of the forest called 'Dandak', at a place called 'Panchvati' as it had five tall trees in a circle. It was at this place that the Lord implemented the next phase of his plan that would culminate in the elimination of the demons—and it was to maneuver the abduction of Sita by the demon king Ravana so that an excuse could be found to eliminate him in the tussle to free Sita. This incident

is the one that has been cited in our aforesaid verse of Kavitawali. It was a watershed development as it was the stepping stone for the next phase of the operation so that the very purpose of Lord Vishnu coming down to earth in the form of Lord Ram could be served. Had Sita not been abducted by Ravana, the story would have been completely different: in all probability it would have been that the Lord wandered here and there in the forest to pass the 14 years of exile and return home to receive the crown of Ayodhya. But that was not the reason why the Lord had come to the forest in the first place.

Therefore, Tulsidas has skipped all other events that are narrated in the full version of the story of Ram's life and time in the deep recesses of the terrifying forest as they were only incidental to the main story and inconsequential to the fulfillment of the main aim of Lord Ram's coming to the forest—which was to get Sita abducted and plant her in the fort of the demons so that the Lord could go there kill the evil demons so as to keep the promise he had made to the sages, the gods and mother earth when they had gone to pray to Lord Vishnu to protect them against the tyranny of Ravana and his demon race, and the Lord had promised them that it shall be done. {Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 184—to Doha no. 187.}

So, Tulsidas cut short the other details of this Chapter which he had already narrated in great detail in his epic narration of Lord Ram's story in his timeless and ageless book known by the name 'Ram Charit Manas' in its Aranya Kand, because, as has been said by the sayer, "that it is needless to repeat it, for there is no avail in a twice-told tale".

Hence, the clever narrator Tulsidas used only one peg to link two ends of the story just like one uses a rock or any other support to jump from this side to the other side of a narrow stream. The first part of the story ends in Ayodhya Kand with the Lord leaving Chitrakoot with his wife and brother, and the other part begins in Kishkindha Kand with the Lord wondering in the forest in search of his abducted wife and preparing to launch the next phase of the campaign of eliminating the demons by moving ahead towards their stronghold at Lanka and taking along the gods who had been waiting for his arrival at Kishkindha in the guise of monkeys and bears (refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Doha no. 187 and Chaupai line nos. 1-5 that follow it).

<sup>1</sup>This incident of Lord Ram running behind the golden deer who was actually the demon Marich in disguise has been described in detail in Ram Charit Manas, from Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 23—to Doha no. 28.

The background story in very brief is as follows:-

Demoness Supernakha, a sister of the demon king Ravana, once saw Lord Ram in his hermitage at Panchavati in the forest. She was bowled-over by the Lord's bewitching charm and beauty, and being a lascivious and promiscuous demoness by nature, she disguised herself as a beautiful damsel and approached the Lord with a proposal of marriage. Obviously, the Lord spurned her and instructed his brother Laxman to cut her nose and ears to shame her. The demoness squirmed in wrath and vowed vengeance. She approached her brothers Khar and Dushan who attacked Lord Ram with the full might of the demon army. Eventually they were slayed in the battle that ensued. So Supernakha went to appeal to Ravana to take revenge. The demon king was astounded and taken aback because he knew that no human being was strong enough to kill Khar and Dushan who were as strong and invincible as him. Nevertheless, he had to square up with Lord Ram, but was too terrified to attack directly. So he employed a ploy: he forced another demon named Marich, who was

on an earlier occasion flung to the middle of the ocean by Lord Ram when he had gone to defile the fire sacrifice of sage Vishwamitra which the Lord was protecting, to become a golden deer so that he (Ravana) can steal Sita, Lord Ram's wife, as a counter deal for the Lord having insulted his sister Supernakha.

Everything was pre-destined by the Lord and he was waiting for this opportunity to have a direct confrontation with the king of demons so that the vows which the Lord had made to the gods and mother earth—that he will kill the cruel demons who were tormenting them—could be fulfilled. So as it happened, Marich roamed about near the hermitage of Lord Ram in the form of a golden deer. Lord Ram privately explained everything to Sita and took her into confidence. She was made to enter the fire to reside with the Fire God in her subtle form while leaving only a shadow of her self in the hermitage. This shadowy Sita asked Lord Ram to bring that golden deer to her as she wanted to keep it a pet. The all-knowing Lord went behind Marich and ultimately killed him. Meanwhile, Sita prevailed upon Laxman to go out to help his brother in the hunt when she heard some distress call made by Marich in the voice of the Lord. Finding the hermitage empty, Ravan approached Sita in the garb of a hermit and sought alms. When she came out to oblige him, he grabbed her and abducted her to Lanka where he kept her under strict vigil in his palace garden known as the 'Ashok Van'.

When Lord Ram returned he found the hermitage empty. Then began the Lord's long search for Sita which led him to meet the monkeys on the mountains of Kishkindha and then later on to the epic war of Lanka when the Lord eliminated all the demons who were sinful and cruel.

This part of the story is narrated in great detail in Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 17—to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 33.]

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa

जब अङ्गदादिनकी मति-गति मंद भई,  
पवनके पूतको न कूदिबेको पलु गो ।  
साहसी है सैलपर सहसा सकेलि आइ,  
चितवत चहूँ ओर, औरनि को कलु गो ॥  
'तुलसी' रसातलको निकसि सलिलु आयो,  
कोलु कलमल्यो, अहि-कमठको बलु गो ।  
चारिहू चरनके चपेट चाँपें चिपिटि गो,  
उचकें उचकि चारि अंगुल अचलु गो ॥ १ ॥

1. jaba aṅgadādinakī mati-gati manda bha'ī,  
pavanakē pūtakō na kūdibēkō palu gō.  
sāhasī hvai sailapara sahasā sakēli ā'i,  
citavata cahūm'ōra, aurani kō kalu gō..  
'tulasi' rasātalakō nikasi salilu āyō,  
kōlu kalamalyō, ahi-kamaṭhakō balu gō.  
cārihū caranakē capēṭa cāmpēṁ cipiṭi gō,  
ucakēṁ ucaki cāri aṅgula acalu gō..1..

Verse no. 4/1—When Angad and other monkeys became distressed, dejected and hopeless because no one was capable to leap across the vast ocean (and therefore, would be unable to achieve success in finding about Sita), in that circumstance the Wind-God's son Hanuman did not take more than a moment to jump up a mountain. Then he began to survey the landscape in all directions. [His courage and bold demeanour instilled fear among the adversaries / enemies, and confidence in the monkeys.] Tulsidas says that water sprouted from the earth's bosom, the God Varaaha (the Boar) wriggled, and God Sheshnath and legendary Tortoise lost their strength and courage. [God Varaaha had enough strength to rescue earth on his snout from the clutches of a demon; the serpent god Shesh holds earth on his hood; while the legendary Tortoise supports the huge mountain, used to churn the mythological ocean by the Gods and demons on his back. It simply means that the earth shook violently when Hanuman leapt upwards.]

When he made the final launch, the huge mountain flattened by the downward pressure of Hanuman's feet; and as soon as he was air-borne and the pressure removed, it rose a little bit—about the height measured by four fingers—from its flattened position. [This indicates a spring-like effect. In modern scientific terms, it is

simple to visualize the event if compared to a rocket launch. The downward thrust generated by the leap-frog action of Hanuman's legs was sufficient to flatten the protuberance on the earth (the hill), and having thus become airborne because of the counter thrust upwards, Hanuman launched himself like a rocket. The pressure thus removed, the spring (the hill) tried to regain its former shape, but such was the weight launched that it could rise only four fingers, and not to the original height.]

[Note—As we have already noted in Aranya Kand, the main thrust of the narrator of our story, Tulsidas, is ‘not to repeat a tale once told, as a tale twice-told is of no avail’. So, like in Aranya Kand, he selected the main event of the next traditional chapter of the story of the Ramayana, called the ‘Kishkindha Kand’, which deals with the Lord meeting and befriending the monkeys and a search party being sent out to find Sita. And this main event was the crossing of the mighty barrier of the ocean by Hanuman. This was the next watershed event that linked the third phase of the story that ends with Lord Ram’s meeting with the monkeys and the finding of Sita at Lanka, which is the subject matter of the next chapter called ‘Sundar Kand’.

After launching his search for Sita, Lord Ram and his brother Laxman met Sabari, an old lady who was a great devotee of the Lord and had waited patiently to meet him. She advised the Lord to go towards the lake known as Pampa on whose bank was situated the kingdom of Kishkindha, the monkey kingdom. Here the Lord would meet Sugriv, one of the chief monkeys, who would help him. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Chaupai line nos. 10-13 that precede Doha no. 36.

So the two brothers wended their way to the foothills of Kishkindha where they befriended Sugriv and his companions. Sugriv was exiled by his elder brother Bali. Upon Sugriv’s request Lord Ram eliminated his opponent and restored him to the throne of Kishkindha. Sugriv was thus obliged, and he summoned the monkey army and send them in all the directions to search for Sita. One party led by Angad, his nephew and the son of Bali, went in the southern direction, towards Lanka. It had all the main monkey captains, such as Hanuman, Nal, Neel and the bear king Jamvant.

When they reached the end of the land and saw the vast ocean stretching endlessly before them, they were heart-broken as they did not know how to proceed further. Then Jamvant invoked the hidden strength of Hanuman who got inspired to leap across the mighty ocean and land on the soil of Lanka (where he met Sita and returned with her news).

This part of the story has been narrated in detail in Kishkindha Kand of Ram Charit Manas, and in brief in Geetawali.]

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## Sundarakāṇḍa

The Ashok Van (the royal garden of Rāvanā)

बासव-बरुन बिधि-बनतें सुहावनो,  
दसाननको काननु बसंतको सिंगारु सो ।  
समय पुराने पात परत, डरत बातु,  
पालत लालत रति-मारको बिहारु सो ॥  
देखें बर बापिका तड़ाग बागको बनाउ,  
रागबस भो बिरागी पवनकुमारु सो ।  
सीयकी दसा बिलोकि बिटप असोक तर,  
'तुलसी' बिलोक्यो सो तिलोक-सोक-सारु सो ॥ १ ॥

1. bāsava-baruna bidhi-banatēm suhāvanō,  
dasānanakō kānanu basantakō siṅgāru sō.  
samaya purānē pāta parata, ḍarata bātu,  
pālata lālata rati-mārakō bihāru sō..  
dēkhēm bara bāpikā taṛāga bāgakō banā'u,  
rāgabasa bhō birāgī pavanakumāru sō.  
sīyakī dasā bilōki biṭapa asōka tara,  
'tulasī' bilōkyō sō tilōka-sōka-sāru sō..1..

Verse no. 5/1—Tulsidas says that the garden of Ravana (i.e. the Ashok grove) was more pleasant than that of Indra, Varun and Brahma. It appeared to be an ornament for even Basant (the spring season). [Tulsidas means that spring is the time when all the gardens, groves and forests bloom and blossom, but the garden of Ravana was so beautiful and enchanting that it appears that spring season drew its own ability of providing beauty and magnificence to Nature from the garden of Ravana known as the Ashok Grove.]

Old leaves fell when the ripe time came because wind was afraid to enter (intrude) into the garden out of Ravana's fear, and instead, it nourished and looked after it like it were the playing field for Kamdeo and Rati (the God of love and his consort respectively).

Seeing excellent ponds, lakes and the layout of the garden, even a great renouncer like Hanuman became enchanted and enthralled. But when he saw the

pitiful condition of Sita under the Ashok tree, the same garden appeared to be the core of all sorrows in the three worlds for him.

[Note—This was the garden within the palace of Ravana where he had kept Sita in captivity.

Hanuman landed on the soil of Lanka in the night, and after overcoming the first obstacle, a fierce demoness known as Lankini who was the chief gate-keeper of the fort and whom Hanuman punched so hard that she swooned and bled in the mouth, he entered the city. Thereafter, he searched for Sita everywhere throughout the night but couldn't locate her. In the morning he met Vibhishan, the brother of the king of demons, Ravana, and a great devotee of Lord Ram. He guided Hanuman to the Ashok garden where Sita was held captive. Hanuman went there and after some time met Sita and exchanged news with her. This part of the story is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, from Chuapai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 1—to Chuapai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 17.

Now, Tulsidas did not describe the Ashok garden nor the burning of Lanka in as fine detail in Ram Charit Manas as was his wont, so he compensates this shortcoming here in Kavitaawali. Why he could not do so in Ram Charit Manas is natural to deduce—it is because he had an extensive story to narrate within the limited space of a book, though his heart yearned that he ought to have done so. But he feared that if he did start elaborating and writing as much as his heart dictated the book would become huge and unmanageably long. He wanted it to be readable and compact, and not so voluminous that the mere sight of it would discourage the potential reader and put him off. So he chose to write three other separate books to satisfy the wish of his heart—to focus exclusively on a particular aspect of the story or personality of its hero Lord Ram. So came into being (i) Kavitaawali, (ii) Geetaawali, and (iii) Barvai Ramayan.

In Kavitaawali he has highlighted some of the subtle things and finer aspects to focus the reader's attention on them which they might have missed or failed to interpret correctly in the main narrative of the story of the life and time of Lord Ram in the book Ram Charit Manas. For instance, take the burning of Lanka. It is more extensively, more vividly and more lucidly described in the verses of Kavitaawali as compared to the other texts.

Then when we move on to the next chapter, the Lanka Kand, we will observe that the way the war has been described there it is absolutely made clear that the real hero of the battle-field is Hanuman, and no one else. Even Lord Ram has explicitly declared it in verse no. 40 of Lanka Kand. Remember: Hanuman was the incarnation of Lord Shiva's eleventh form known as Rudra, and Tulsidas wished to emphasise the fact that the war was actually fought by Shiva on behalf of Ram and the Gods. This he could not do in his other epic narratives to maintain balance and equilibrium and do justice to the other characters of the story, but nevertheless it was important to highlight this point. So he decided to devote the entire part of the narrative of the war at Lanka to Hanuman in Kavitaawali's Lanka Kand. ]

माली मेघमाल, बनपाल बिकराल भट,  
नीकें सब काल सींचैं सुधासार नीरके ।  
मेघनाथ तैं दुलारो, प्रान तैं पियारो बागु,  
अति अनुरागु जियँ जातुधान धीर कैं ।।  
'तुलसी' सो जानि-सुनि, सीयको दरसु पाइ,  
पैछे बाटिकाँ बजाइ बल रघुबीर कैं ।  
बिद्यमान देखत दसाननको काननु सो

तहस-नहस कियो साहसी समीर केँ ।। 2 ।।

2. mālī mēghamāla, banapāla bikarāla bhaṭa,  
nīkēm saba kāla sīncāim sudhāsāra nīrakē.  
mēghanātha tēm dulārō, prāna tēm piyārō bāgu,  
ati anurāgu jiyam̐ jātudhāna dhīra kēm..  
'tulasī' sō jāni-suni, sīyakō darasu pā'i,  
paiṭhō bāṭikām̐ bajā'i bala raghubīra kēm.  
bidyamāna dēkhata dasānanakō kānanu sō  
tahasa-nahasa kiyo sāhasī samīra kēm..2..

[Here, Tulsidas describes the Ashok grove]

Verse no. 5/2—The clouds are the gardeners (i.e. they water the grove by their rains—this shows it was a big forest-like grove), and the guards are ferocious and huge-bodied. It appeared that the clouds watered the grove with nectar (1).

Ravana loved the garden immensely—more than even his son Meghnad and his own life (2).

Tulsidas says that inspite of knowing everything about this garden (that it is privileged place very much liked by the king of demons, and to enter it and ruin it would be like entering a lion's den to challenge him with bare hands), Hanuman fearlessly entered the grove on the strength of Lord Ram (3). Inspite of the awesome presence of Ravana and his special protection of this particular garden, the courageous son of the Wind-God (Hanuman) laid it to waste (4). [5/2]

{Acting on the ill-thought sycophantic advice of his dumb-witted advisors who said things that pleased their demon king Ravana, instead of being honest and giving an advice that would have been for the good of the kingdom of Lanka, orders were issued to wrap Hanuman's tail in cloth and set it afire. This is what Hanuman was waiting for. As soon as the cloth was lit with fire and oil, he became small in size, thereby easily pulling his tail out of the huge cylindrical tube that the cloth formed when it was wrapped around his thick tail earlier when he had a colossus form. Then he jumped from one place to another in the city, dragging the burning tube of cloth behind him. This started a big fire in Lanka, and the whole city was reduced to cinders.}

[Note—Upon landing in Lanka, Hanuman went all over the place but could not locate Sita. In the morning that followed the night of his landing, he heard Vibhishan reciting the holy name of Lord Ram. Deciding that he must surely be a devotee of the Lord, Hanuman went and introduced himself to him. It was Vibhishan who directed him to the garden where Sita was held. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 3-5 that precede Doha no. 8.

Hanuman finally met Sita and gifted to her the signet ring that Lord Ram had given him for identification. After having exchanged news with her, he sought her permission to go and eat fruits in the orchard. Then he laid to waste the private garden of Ravana and beat back the demon guards. Finally he was captured by Meghnad, the son of Ravana, who brought Hanuman to the royal court. Then followed a heated and acrimonious verbal duel between the demon king and Hanuman. Furious at the latter's temerity and fearlessness inspite of being in captivity, Ravana ordered his staff to burn the monkey's tail and let him go back to his Master with a scarred body so that the latter can be shown the insult and rebuke in a symbolic manner because a person's messenger is his representative.



The stupid demons said—‘To hear is to obey’, and wrapped the tail with cloth wetted in oil. Miraculously, the tail kept on elongating till it circled the entire city. Then reduced himself in size to escape from the ropes that tied him and leapt all across the city, burying it to ashes. Then he jumped in the ocean to douse the flame, took permission from Sita and came back to this side of the ocean where his companions were waiting for him most anxiously.

This story is narrated in Ram Charit Mana, Sundar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 8—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 28.

Refer also to Geetawali, Sundar Kand, verse nos. 1-16.]

### The Burning of Laṅkā

बसन बटोरि बोरि-बोरि तेल तमीचर,  
 खोरि-खोरि धाड़ आड़ बाँधत लँगूर हैं ।  
 तैसो कपि कौतुकी डेरात ढीले गात कै-कै,  
 लातके अघात सहै, जीमें कहै, क्रूर हैं ॥  
 बाल किलकारी कै-कै, तारी दै-दै गारी देत,  
 पाछे लागे, बाजत निसान ढोल तूर हैं ।  
 बालधी बढ़न लागी, ठौर-ठौर दीन्ही आगी,  
 बिंधिकी दवारि कैधौ कोटिसत सूर हैं ॥३॥

3. basana baṭōri bōri-bōri tēla tamīcara,  
 khōri-khōri dhā'i ā'i bām̐dhata lam̐gūra haim̐.  
 taisō kapi kautukī ḍērāta ḍhīlē gāta kai-kai,  
 lātakē aghāta sahai, jīmēm̐ kahai, krūra haim̐..  
 bāla kilakārī kai-kai, tāri dai-dai gārī dēta,  
 pāchēm̐ lāgē, bājata nisāna ḍhōla tūra haim̐.  
 bāladhī barhana lāgī, ṭhaura-ṭhaura dīnhī āgī,  
 bindhikī davāri kaidhaur̐ kōṭisata sūra haim̐..3..

Verse no. 5/3—The demons rushed along all the lanes and bye-lanes (of the city of Lanka), collected all available cloth, dipped them in oil and wrapped them on Hanuman's tail. Similarly, the playful Hanuman pretends to be afraid and tolerates their kicks and blows with relaxed muscles (i.e. he does not resist), and considers them to be cowards. The children, clapping and laughing in derision, are abusing him and having a merry of a time as they joined the elder demons; and drums, tom-toms and bugles are being sounded (as if a great drama is being staged in the city).

The tail started elongating and the demons ignited it (i.e. they lit the wrapped cloth with fire) randomly at various points which made it appear like the great (forest or wild) fire of the Vindhya mountains, or like one hundred crore (millions of) suns shining simultaneously.

[Note—The story of how and why Lanka was burnt has been described in Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 17—to Doha no. 26.

But however, the description of the actual destruction of Lanka as has been described in Ram Charit Manas is very brief, only from Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 25—to Doha no. 26, as compared to the narration here in

Kavitawali which is exceptionally fine and vivid. Here it is spread over from verse no. 3—right upto verse no. 25.]

लाइ-लाइ आगि भागे बालजाल जहाँ तहाँ,  
लघु है निबुकि गिरि मेरुतें बिसाल भो ।  
कौतुकी कपीसु कूदि कनक-कँगुराँ चढ्यो,  
रावन-भवन चढ़ि ठढ़े तेहि काल भो ।।  
'तुलसी' विराज्यो ब्योम बालधी पसारि भारी,  
देखें हहरात भट, कालु सो कराल भो ।  
तेजको निधानु मानो कोटिक कृसानु-भानु,  
नख बिकराल, मुखु तैसो रिस लाल भो ।।4।।

4. lā'i-lā'i āgi bhāgē bālajāla jahām̐ tahām̐,  
laghu hvai nibuki giri mērutēm̐ bisāla bhō.  
kautukī kapīsu kūdi kanaka-kamṡūrām̐ caḍhyō,  
rāvana-bhavana caḍhi ṭhārḥō tēhi kāla bhō..  
'tulasi' virājyō byōma bāladhī pasāri bhārī,  
dēkhēm̐ haharāta bhaṭa, kālu sō karāla bhō.  
tējako nidhānu mānō kōṭika kṛsānu-bhānu,  
nakha bikarāla, mukhu taisō risa lāla bhō..4..

Verse no. 5/4—The mischievous children of Lanka ignited the tail of Hanuman and ran away jesting and laughing, and when the cloth wrapped around the tail was fully ablaze Hanuman shrank his body to a miniscule size. The tail slipped out of the wrappings, and once free of his bondage, he assumed a colossal body like that of Mt. Sumeru (1).

The playful Hanuman then leapt on the golden pinnacle atop the palace of Ravana (2).

Tulsidas says he looked remarkable there with his long tail, flames leaping from it against the sky. Seeing him, even the courageous demons shivered out of fear. Hanuman became ferocious like the God of death and destruction (3).

He appeared to be the fountain of energy as if he embodied millions of fires and suns at the same time. His nails looked ferocious, and the face was red with anger (4).

बालधी बिसाल बिकराल, ज्वालजाल मानो  
लंक लीलिबेको काल रसना पसारी है ।  
कैधौ ब्योमबीथिका भरे हैं भूरि धूमकेतु,  
बीररस बीर तरवारि सो उधारी है ।।  
'तुलसी' सुरेस-चापु, कैधौ दामिनि-कलापु,  
कैधौ चली मेरु तें कृसानु-सरि भारी है ।  
देखें जातुधान-जातुधानी अकुलानी कहैं,  
काननु उजार्यो, अब नगरु प्रजारिहै ।।5।।

5. bāladhī bisāla bikarāla, jvālajāla mānō  
laṅka līlibēkō kāla rasanā pasāri hai.  
kaidhaur̐ byōmabīthikā bharē haiṁ bhūri dhūmakētu,  
bīrarasa bīra taravāri sō ughārī hai..  
'tulasi' surēsa-cāpu, kaidhaur̐ dāmini-kalāpu,

kaidhaurṁ calī mēru tēm kṛṣānu-sari bhārī hai.  
dēkhēm jātudhāna-jātudhānīm akulānī kahaim,  
kānanu ujāryō, aba nagaru prajārihai..5..

Verse no. 5/5—The huge tail, burning with a terrible ferocity of a fire with leaping flames, resembled the outstretched tongue of Death, eager to gobble up Lanka, or as if a thousand comets have covered the sky, or Bravery, in a personified form, has drawn the sword to kill.

Tulsidas wonders whether it is a rainbow, a fount of lightening or a river of fire flowing down from Mt. Sumeru. Seeing all this, the demons and demonesses (female demons) say—‘He (Hanuman) has already laid the garden (the Ashoka grove) to waste, and now he shall burn the city.’

जहाँ-तहाँ बुबुक बिलोकि बुबुकारी देत,  
जरत निकेत, धावौ, धावौ लागी आगि रे।  
कहाँ तातु-मातु, भात-भगिनी, भामिनी-भाभी,  
ढोटा छोटे छोहरा अभागे भोंडे भागि रे।।  
हाथी छोरो, घोरा छोरो, महिष-बृषभ छोरो,  
छेरी छोरो, सोवै सो जगावौ, जागि, जागि रे।  
‘तुलसी’ बिलोकि अकुलानि जातुधानी कहै,  
बार-बार कह्यौ, पिय! कपिसों न लागि रे।।6।।

6. jahām'tahām' bubuka bilōki bubukārī dēta,  
jarata nikēta, dhāvau, dhāvau lāgi āgi rē.  
kahām'tātu-mātu, bhrāta-bhaginī, bhāminī-bhābhī,  
ḍhōṭā chōṭē chōharā abhāgē bhōṇḍē bhāgi rē..  
hāthī chōrau, ghōrā chōrau, mahīśa-br̥ṣabha chōrau,  
chērī chōrau, sōvai sō jagāvau, jāgi, jāgi rē.  
'tulasī' bilōki akulāni jātudhānīm kahaim,  
bāra-bāra kahyaum, piya! kapisōm na lāgi rē..6..

Verse no. 5/6—There was a huge tumult in the city as demons and demonesses, seeing the huge blaze and scorching heat (generated by the flames), ran out in panic, yelling—‘Oh run, run for your lives! Houses are burning; everything is on fire (1). Oh you wretched! Where are the parents, brothers and sisters, wives and in-laws, children—where are they? (2) Oh fool! Run, run—hurry, make haste as there is no time left; everything is on fire! Set free the elephants, horses, buffaloes, oxen, goats etc. Those who are asleep, wake them up. Oh wake up, wake up—this is not the time to sleep!’ (3)

Tulsidas says that the wives sternly admonished their demon husbands, saying, ‘We repeatedly told you not to play funny with this monkey, but you all didn't pay heed; now what do we do? (4)’.

देखि ज्वालाजालु, हाहाकारु दसकंध सुनि,  
कह्यौ, धरो, धरो, धाए बीर बलवान हैं।  
लिएँ सूल-सेल, पास-परिघ, प्रचंड दंड,  
भाजन सनीर, धीर धरें धनु-बान हैं।।

‘तुलसी’ समिध सौंज, लंक जग्यकुंडु लखि,  
जातुधान पुंगीफल जव तिल धान हैं।  
सुवा सो लँगूल, बलमूल प्रतिकूल हबि,  
स्वाहा महा हाँकि हाँकि हुनै हनुमान हैं।।7।।

7. dēkhi jvālājālu, hāhākāru dasakandha suni,  
kahyau, dharō, dharō, dhā'ē bīra balavāna haiṁ.  
li'ēm̃ sūla-sēla, pāsa-parigha, pracaṇḍa daṇḍa,  
bhājana sanīra, dhīra dharēm̃ dhanu-bāna haiṁ..  
'tulasi' samidha saunīja, laṅka jagyakuṇḍu lakhi,  
jātudhāna puṁgīphala java tila dhāna haiṁ.  
sruvā sō lamḡūla, balamūla pratikūla habi,  
svāhā mahā hām̃ki hām̃ki hunaiṁ hanumāna haiṁ..7..

Verse no. 5/7—Alarmed at the scorching and leaping flames, and the distressed tumult of the citizens, Ravana shouted, ‘Oh! Catch him, catch him!’ Hearing his orders, many strong warriors rushed forward, armed with tridents, spears, lances, strong batons (to beat), snares (to trap the monkey Hanuman) and bows and arrows (to shoot and kill him if necessary).

Tulsidas compares the scene to a fire sacrifice (Yagya), saying that Lanka resembled the sacrificial pit, the property was like wood (or fuel), and the demons were nuts, barley, mustard and rice (materials used to offer sacrifice in the fire). Hanuman’s tail is a ladle, strong enemy is the ‘Havi’ (butter, rice, pudding, sweets and sacrificial items offered to the fire as described above), and the high-pitched war-cry of challenge made by Hanuman appears to be the chanting of the Vedic Mantras (scriptural hymns) during the rituals of the fire sacrifice.

गाज्यो कपि गाज ज्यो, बिराज्यो ज्वालजालजुत,  
भाजे बीर धीर, अकुलाइ उठ्यो रावनो।  
धावौ, धावौ, धरौ, सुनि धाए जातुधान धारि,  
बारिधारा उलदै जलदु जौन सावनो।।  
लपट-झपट झहराने, हहराने बात,  
भहराने भट, पर्यो प्रबल परावनो।  
ढक्कनि ढक्कलि, पेलि सचिव चले लै ठेलि,  
नाथ! न चलैगो बलु, अनलु भयावनो।।8।।

8. gājyō kapi gāja jyōm̃, birājyō jvālājālajuta,  
bhājē bīra dhīra, akulā'i uṭhyō rāvanō.  
dhāvau, dhāvau, dharau, suni dhā'ē jātudhāna dhāri,  
bāridhārā uladai jaladu jauna sāvanōm̃..  
lapaṭa-jhapaṭa jhaharānē, haharānē bāta,  
bhaharānē bhaṭa, paryō prabala parāvanō.  
ḍhakani ḍhakēli, pēli saciva calē lai ṭhēli,  
nātha! na calaigō balu, analu bhayāvanō..8..

Verse no. 5/8—Hanuman looked like a furnace and roared like a thunderbolt; the most courageous and brave among the demons were so scared that they took to their

heels, and Ravana, being extremely distressed and very agitated, shouted at the top of his voice—‘Catch him, catch him!’ (1).

At his cajoling and coaxing, the army of demons rushed forward as if the dark rain bearing clouds wished to douse the fire (2), but those warriors were scorched and scalded by the leaping flames and the burning breeze sweeping towards them (3).

They ran helter-skelter. Ravana was pushed, shoved and forcefully removed from the site by his ministers, who warned him, ‘Oh Lord! The fire is absolutely ferocious and out of control. We can’t stand against it.’ (4).

बड़ो बिकराल बेषु देखि, सुनि सिंघनादु,  
उठ्यौ मेघनादु, सबिषाद कहै रावनो ।  
बेग जित्यो मारुतु, प्रताप मारतंड कोटि,  
कालऊ करालताँ, बड़ाई जित्यो बावनो ।।  
‘तुलसी’ सयाने जातुधान पछिताने कहैं,  
जाको ऐसो दूतु, सो तो साहेबु अबै आवनो ।  
काहेको कुसल रोषे राम बामदेवहू की,  
बिषम बलीसों बादि बैरको बढ़ावनो ।।११।।

9. baṛō bikarāla bēśu dēkhi, suni siṅghanādu,  
uṭhyau mēghanādu, sabiśāda kahai rāvanō.  
bēga jityō mārutu, pratāpa māratāṇḍa kōṭi,  
kāla’ū karālatām̐, baṛā’īm̐ jityō bāvanō..  
‘tulasi’ sayānē jātudhāna pachitānē kahaim̐,  
jākō aisō dūtu, sō tō sāhēbu abai āvanō.  
kāhēkō kusala rōśēm̐ rāma bāmadēvahū kī,  
biśama balisōm̐ bādi bairakō baṛhāvanō..9..

Verse no. 5/9—Seeing the ferocious and terribly angry countenance of Hanuman, and hearing his chilling war-cry that resounded in every direction, Meghnad stood up. A worried Ravana said, ‘This fellow (Hanuman) has out-smarted wind in speed, millions of suns in splendour, Kaal (death) in ferocity, and Lord Vaaman\* in his colossus size.’ [\*Lord Vaaman had measured the entire creation in his three steps.]

Tulsidas says that those demons that had some wisdom left in them, lamented and said, ‘The master, whose servant is so terrible and awesome, is yet to come (say—what will happen then?). One wonders how even Lord Shiva can ever expect to be happy if Lord Ram becomes angry at him? It is futile and unwise to enhance enmity with such a warrior as Hanuman.

[In other words, it would have been wiser if our king Ravana had not ordered Hanuman’s tail to be burnt, for then the city would have been spared from being reduced to ashes. It is not wise to make Lord Ram’s messenger an enemy.]’

पानी!पानी!पानी! सब रानी अकुलानी कहैं,  
जाति हैं परानी, गति जानी गजचालि है ।  
बसन बिसारैं, मनिभूषन सँभारत न,  
आनन सुखाने, कहैं, क्योंहू कोऊ पालिहै ।।  
‘तुलसी’ मँदोवै मीजि हाथ, धुनि माथ कहै,  
काहूँ कान कियो न, मैं कह्यौ केतो कालि है ।  
बापुरें बिभीषन पुकारि बार-बार कह्यौ,

बानरु बड़ी बलाइ घने घर घालिहै ।।10।।

10. pānī!pānī!pānī! saba rānī akulānī kahaim,  
jāti haiṁ parānī, gati jānī gajacāli hai.  
basana bisāraim, manibhūsana sambhārata na,  
ānana sukhānē, kahaim, kyōnhū kō'ū pālihai..  
'tulasi' mamḍōvai miji hātha, dhuni mātha kahai,  
kāhūṁ kāna kiyō na, maim kahyau kētō kāli hai.  
bāpurēm bibhīśana pukāri bāra-bāra kahyau,  
bānaru baṛī balā'i ghanē ghara ghālihai..10..

Verse no. 5/10—All the queens of Ravana ran hither-thither agitatedly, shouting, 'Water, water!' They can be recognised by their elephant-like majestic gait. They had forgotten to put on proper clothes (in a hurry), and neither could they take care of gem-studded ornaments (as they ran in panic, seeking water). Their mouths are parched and they lament woefully, 'Can any one protect us in some way?'

Tulsidas says that Mandodari (the chief queen) grieves and laments by wringing her hands and beating her head—'Oh goodness! I tried to reason with my husband Ravana so much yesterday, but no one lent me his ears. Poor Vibhishan had also warned repeatedly that this monkey is a great problem, and he shall ruin many households, but no one paid attention to either of us.'

काननु उजार्यो तो उजार्यो, न बिगार्यो कछु,  
बानरु बेचारो बाँधि आन्यो हठि हारसों ।  
निपट निडर देखि काहू न लख्यो बिसेषि,  
दीन्हो ना छड़ाइ कहि कुलके कुठारसों ।।  
छोटे औ बड़ेरे मेरे पूतऊ अनेरे सब,  
साँपनि सों खेलैं, मेलैं गरे छुराधार सों ।  
'तुलसी' मँदोवै रोइ-रोइ कै बिगोवै आपु,  
बार-बार कह्यौ मैं पुकारि दाढ़ीजारसों ।।11।।

11. kānanu ujāryō tō ujāryō, na bigāryō kachu,  
bānaru bēcārō bāmḍhi ān'yō haṭhi hārasōm.  
nipaṭa niḍara dēkhi kāhū na lakhyō bisēśi,  
dīnhō nā charā'i kahi kulakē kuṭhārasōm..  
chōṭē au baṛērē mērē pūta'ū anērē saba,  
sāmṇani sōm khēlaim, mēlaim garē churādhāra sōm.  
'tulasi' mamḍōvai rō'i-rō'i kai bigōvai āpu,  
bāra-bāra kahyau maim pukāri dāṛhijārasōm..11..

Verse no. 5/11—Mandodari continues lamenting, 'There was not much harm done by laying to waste the Ashok garden, but these fellows had unnecessarily tied this humble monkey and brought him here (in the city from the outskirts). Seeing him absolutely fearless, could no one get a hint (that there surely is some hidden strong power behind this monkey on whose strength he could do such things that are beyond imagination of even the strongest of creatures in the creator's creation of even dreaming of, let alone actually doing; say, how stupid these demons are indeed)? And no one had advised Meghnad, who is ruinous for his clan, to release this monkey

before he could cause further harm to the city. Oh I lament that all my sons, young or old, are haughty, arrogant, reckless, senseless and evil—out of all the playthings meant for playing they select to play with snakes, and they prefer to put their throat on the sharpened edge of a knife during play (not bothering for the danger they are subjecting themselves to).'

[Mandodari laments at the bellicose, reckless, haughty and defiant nature of her sons that they do not ponder about the consequences of their acts before doing anything. And driven by the same nature Meghnad had played into the hands of Hanuman by thinking that he had subdued the latter when he managed to ensnare him, little realising that he is playing with fire and falling into a trap. He should have realised that this monkey was not an ordinary animal but surely someone backed by a mighty force, for was it not clear to my son that it wasn't easy to enter Lanka with all the safety measures that his formidable father, the demon king Ravana, has got in place? Why is Meghnad so dumb-witted so as to have overlooked this fact, and the fact that a diminutive monkey could beat the life out of the fiercest of demons who tried to capture him as he plundered the royal garden with impunity?]

Tulsidas says that Mandodari weakens herself by weeping inconsolably, and says that she had warned repeatedly this stupid and cursed 'Dadhijaar' (dārḥijāra)\* son Meghnad to be wary of acting in a nonsensical manner, but he didn't listen to her or cared for her warning.

[\*The word 'dārḥijāra' is a derisive term often used as an abusive curse by women against men. It literally means "one who has burnt his beard".]

रानी अकुलानी सब डाढ़त परानी जाहिं,  
सकैं न बिलोकि बेषु केसरीकुमारको ।  
मीजि-मीजि हाथ, धुनै माथ दसमाथ-तिय,  
'तुलसी' तिलौ न भयो बाहेर अगारको ।।  
सबु असबाबु डाढ़ो, मै न काढ़ो, तैं न काढ़ो,  
जियकी परी, सँभारै सहन-भँडार को ।  
खीझति मँदोवै सबिषाद देखि मेघनादु,  
बयो लुनियत सब याही दाढ़ीजारको ।।12 ।।

12. rānī akulānī saba dārḥata parānī jāhim,  
sakair̥ na bilōki bēśu kēsarikumārakō.  
mīji-mīji hātha, dhunair̥ mātha dasamātha-tiya,  
'tulasi' tilau na bhayō bāhēra agārakō..  
sabu asabābu dārḥō, mair̥ na kārḥō, tair̥ na kārḥō,  
jiyakī parī, sam̐bhārai sahana-bhamḍāra kō.  
khījhati mamḍōvai sabisāda dēkhi mēghanādu,  
bayō luniyata saba yāhī dārḥijārakō..12..

Verse no. 5/12—Being scorched by the ferocity of the raging fire, the demon-queens ran out of their inner chambers, extremely agitated and very perturbed. They cannot watch the ferocious shape of 'Kēsarikumāra' (Hanuman, the son of Kesari).

Ravana's wives wring their hands, beat their heads and lament that not a single item could be salvaged from their homes. They cried woefully—'Everything has got burnt. Neither could I remove anything, nor could you. Everyone was concerned about his own safety, so who was bothered about the household.'

Sighting Meghnad, Mandodari became wrathfully angry at him, poignantly admonishing him for the woes that had befallen upon the entire city and the demon race, cursing him in these words: 'Everyone is reaping the harvest of what this accursed and stupidest of all beings had sown. [Had he not brought the monkey inside the city and had let him go away, such a sordid calamity would not have befallen on the city at all. Why, say why did he do what he did, just to boast about his exploit that he had caught a monkey! Well now, where has Meghnad's strength gone now, for a toss or where else, that he ain't able to tame the same monkey he had boasted to have subdued not a long while ago? Having evil sons is indeed a cursed bane for the mother as they cause more grief to her than even the most unfavourable of stars and malignant of fates.]'

रावन की रानी बिलखानी कहै जातुधानी,  
हाहा! कोऊ कहै बीसबाहु दसमाथसों।  
काहे मेघनाद! काहे, काहे रे महोदर ! तूँ  
धीरजु न देत, लाइ लेत क्यों न हाथसों।।  
काहे अतिकाय! काहे, काहे रे अकंपन!  
अभागे तीय त्यागे भोंड़े भागे जात साथ सों।  
'तुलसी' बढ़ाई बादि सालतें बिसाल बाहैं,  
याहीं बल बालिसो बिरोधु रघुनाथसों।।13।।

13. rāvana kī rānīm bilakhānī kahai jātudhānīm,  
hāhā! kō'ū kahai bīsabāhu dasamāthasōm.  
kāhē mēghanāda! kāhē, kāhē rē mahōdara! tūm'  
dhīrajū na dēta, lā'i lēta kyōm na hāthasōm..  
kāhē atikāya! kāhē, kāhē rē akampana!  
abhāgē tīya tyāgē bhōṇṛē bhāgē jāta sātha sōm.  
'tulasi' barhā'īm bādi sālatēm bisāla bāhaim,  
yāhīm bala bālisō birōdhu raghunāthasōm..13..

Verse no. 5/13—Demonesses, who were queens of Ravana, cried uncontrollably and inconsolably, lamenting woefully as they wailed, 'Oh Gosh! Someone should inform our pitiable condition to the ten-headed and twenty-armed Ravana (their husband, the demon king).

Why, oh you Meghnad! And why, oh you Mahodar! Why don't you now step forward to console us and why don't you give us protection of your arms (something of which you had boasted of ever since you had stepped out of your cradle)? Oh you Atikai, and you Akampan! Oh you luckless idiots. Why do you abandon your women folk and run away en-masse, leaving us in the lurch?

You fellows have uselessly lengthened your arms as long as teak trees. [That is, you pretend to have long and sturdy arms that have a long reach and can encircle your enemies and hold them in a vice-like grip, but actually they are no better than feeble creepers.]

Oh you fools and loggerheads! Is this the cowardly strength relying on which you have created enmity with Sri Raghunath (the Lord of Raghu's kingdom; Lord Sri Ram)? [Now come on; show your valour when the time has come. Instead, you prefer to flee.]'



हाट-बाट, कोट-ओट, अटनि, अगार, पौरि,  
 खोरि-खोरि दौरि-दौरि दीन्ही अति आगि है।  
 आरत पुकारत, सँभारत न कोऊ काहू,  
 ब्याकुल जहाँ सो तहाँ लोक चले भागि हैं।।  
 बालधी फिरावै, बार-बार झहरावै, झरै  
 बुँदिया-सी लंक पघिलाइ पाग पागिहै।  
 'तुलसी' बिलोकि अकुलानी जातुधानी कहै,  
 चित्रहू के कपि सों निसाचरु न लागिहै।।14।।

14. hāṭa-bāṭa, kōṭa-ōṭa, aṭani, agāra, pauri,  
 khōri-khōri dauri-dauri dīnhī ati āgi haiai.  
 ārata pukārata, sam̐bhārata na kō'ū kāhū,  
 byākula jahām̐ sō tahām̐ lōka calē bhāgi haim̐..  
 bāladhī phirāvai, bāra-bāra jhaharāvai, jharaim̐  
 bum̐diyā-sī laṅka paghilā'i pāga pāgihai.  
 'tulasī' bilōki akulānī jātudhānīm̐ kahaim̐,  
 citrahū kē kapi sōm̐ nisācaru na lāgihai..14..

Verse no. 5/14—In this way, Hanuman set to fire the market places, forts, palaces, ramparts and gates, houses, lanes and by-lanes, every nook and corner of the city (1).

Everyone is crying in agony, and no one bothers about another; all are running helter-skelter (2).

Hanuman shook his tail often, and ambers and sparks of fire flew from it as if he wished to prepare a sweet dish called Bundiya made of small round globules of gram-flour soaked in treacle (molasses) symbolized by the melted-down gold of Lanka (3).

Seeing all this, the demonesses (female demons) said that after witnessing such a horrific scene, the demons would not dare to fight even a dummy monkey in future (4).'

लगी, लागी आगि, भागि-भागि चले जहाँ-तहाँ,  
 धीयको न माय, बाप पूत न सँभारहीं।  
 छूटे बार, बसन उघारे, धूम-धुंध अंध,  
 कहैं बारे-बूढ़े 'बारि, बारि' बार बारहीं।।  
 हय हिहिनात, भागे जात घहरात गज,  
 भारी भीर ठेलि-पेलि रौंदि-खौंदि डारहीं।  
 नाम लै चिलात, बिललात, अकुलात अति,  
 'तात तात! तौंसिअत, झौंसिअत, झारहीं'।।15।।

15. lagī, lāgī āgi, bhāgi-bhāgi calē jahām̐-tahām̐,  
 dhīyakō na māya, bāpa pūta na sam̐bhārahīm̐.  
 chūṭē bāra, basana ughārē, dhūma-dhundha andha,  
 kahaim̐ bārē-būṛhē 'bāri, bāri' bāra bārahīm̐..  
 haya hihināta, bhāgē jāta ghaharāta gaja,  
 bhārī bhīra ṭhēli-pēli raundi-khaundi ḍārahīm̐.  
 nāma lai cilāta, bilalāta, akulāta ati,  
 'tāta tāta! taunsi'ata, jhaunsi'ata, jhārahīm̐'..15..

Verse no. 5/15—Everyone is panicky and run hither-thither at random, shouting 'It has caught fire. It's burning!'

Neither does a mother bother about her daughter, nor a father about his son. Their hairs and clothes have become dishevelled, everyone has become (virtually) naked, and having been blinded by the dense smoke (emerging from the fire), all are shouting for water. The horses run away neighing, the elephants trumpet wildly as they trample underfoot the huge crowd which has collected. Everyone is calling others by their names, and all of them are agitated and writhing in agony due to the scorching heat. A raucous cry fills the city with everyone shouting, 'Oh my God! The flames are scorching us; it's intolerably hot! [Where to do we escape from this raging hell of a fire that surrounds us from all quarters?]'

लपट कराल ज्वालजालमाल दहूँ दिसि,  
धूम अकुलाने, पहिचानै कौन काहि रे।  
पानीको ललात बिललात, जरे गात जात  
परे पाइमाल जात 'भात! तूँ निबाहि रे॥  
प्रिया तूँ पराहि, नाथ!नाथ! तूँ पराहि, बाप!  
बाप तूँ पराहि, पूत!पूत! तूँ पराहि रे'।  
'तुलसी' बिलोकि लोग ब्याकुल बेहाल कहैं,  
लेहि दससीस अब बीस चख चाहि रे॥१६॥

16. lapaṭa karāla jvālajālamāla dahūm̐ disi,  
dhūma akulānē, pahicānai kauna kāhi rē.  
pānīkō lalāta bilalāta, jarē gāta jāta  
parē pā'imāla jāta 'bhrāta! tūm̐ nibāhi rē..  
priyā tūm̐ parāhi, nātha!nātha! tūm̐ parāhi, bāpa!  
bāpa tūm̐ parāhi, pūta!pūta! tūm̐ parāhi rē'.  
'tulasi' bilōki lōga byākula bēhāla kahaim̐,  
lēhi dasasīsa aba bīsa cakha cāhi rē..16..

Verse no. 5/16—The terrible, leaping flames of the 'garland' (the girdle) of fire has spread in all the 10 directions (i.e. everywhere)<sup>1</sup>. All are extremely distressed due to the choking smoke. Who could recognise anyone in that tumult? All are dying for water; their bodies are getting scorched, they are highly distressed and cry out, 'Oh brother! Save me! Dear! You run away from here to save yourself! Oh Lord, run away! Father, oh father! Run! Oh son, listen son! Escape from here!'

Tulsidas says that everyone is extremely distressed, woeful to the extreme, agitated and tormented, and all of them curse Ravana by the bountiful—'Oh you wretched fellow known as Ravana! Now see what you have done, with all of your 20 eyes<sup>2</sup>.'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The 10 directions are the following—north, north-east, east, south-east, south, south-west, west, north-west, nadir and zenith.

<sup>2</sup>Ravana had ten heads, each with two eyes. Hence he had 10 heads x 2 eyes in each head = 20 eyes. To say 'look with all your 20 eyes' is a sort of scorn-filled remark implying that Ravana should open all his eyes wide to watch the destruction he has brought forth upon the city, and not turn his face away to behave like an ostrich when it is in distress.]

बीथिका-बजार प्रति, अटनि अगार प्रति,  
पवरि-पगार प्रति बानरु बिलोकिए।  
अध-ऊर्ध्व बानर, बिदिसि-दिसि बानरु है,

मानो रह्यो है भरि बानरु तिलोकिएँ ।।  
 मूँदें आँखि हियमें, उघारें आँखि आगें ठाढ़ो,  
 धाड़ जाड़ जहाँ-तहाँ, और कोऊ कोकिए ।  
 लेहू, अब लेहु तब कोऊ न सिखाबो मानो,  
 सोई सतराड़ जाड़ जाहि-जाहि रोकिए ।। 17 ।।

17. bīthikā-bajāra prati, aṭani agāra prati,  
 pavari-pagāra prati bānaru bilōki'ē.  
 adha-ūrdha bānara, bidisi-disi bānaru hai,  
 mānō rahyau hai bhari bānaru tilōki'ēm̃..  
 mūm̃dair̃ ām̃khi hiyamēm̃, ughārēm̃ ām̃khi āgēm̃ ṭhār̃hō,  
 dhā'i jā'i jahām̃-tahām̃, aura kō'ū kōki'ē.  
 lēhū, aba lēhu taba kō'ū na sikhābō mānō,  
 sōī satarā'i jā'i jāhi-jāhi rōki'ē..17..

Verse no. 5/17—Hanuman is moving so swiftly that wherever one sees—lanes and by-lanes, markets, house-tops, every house, doorway and its walls etc.—only the monkey is seen, above and below, in all the directions. Wherever one turns, one can see that monkey as if he has filled (spread over) all the 3 worlds (like an evil omen that had descended upon the city of Lanka).

His image is visible while one closes one's eyes, and on opening them he appears to be standing right in front, menacingly. Whenever, wherever they (the citizens of Lanka) call anyone, it appears that Hanuman answers the call and stands in front to frighten the wits out of the caller. When they try to stop anyone, he gets angry, saying, 'Look; look now! No one had paid attention to our advice earlier<sup>1</sup>.'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Surely there must have been some wise demons in the city who had been in favour of allowing the monkey to get away from there after they had witnessed how he had laid to waste the royal garden of Ravana and had beaten black and blue the guards who had tried to intervene. It would have made sense not to aggravate the situation any more right then, but instead be alarmed and take warning that this fellow, the monkey, is sure to come back at the behest of his master, whosoever he may be, in full strength alongside his companions once he had seen how to breach the city's defenses. It would have made sense to pull up the sock and learn a lesson from this intrusion to be prepared with full diligence and might for the almost certain ill-tidings that were to come upon the city like the dark clouds of doomsday that loomed over the horizon. Due diligence and proper preparations and girdling one's self with resolve to face the unforeseen eventuality was the demand of the day and advice of the wisdom, and not the stupidity and foolishness of trying to further instigate the monkey who seems to possess some mysterious strength that was far superior to the combined strength of all the demon army.

So the wise demons who were in favour of releasing Hanuman and letting him go away now lamented that their views were neglected and brushed aside by the nature of belligerence, haughtiness and arrogance that dominated the majority of the demon clan. And now the result is for everyone to behold.]

एक करें धौंज, एक कहैं, काढ़ौ सौंज, एक  
 औंजि, पानी पीकै कहैं, बनत न आवनो ।  
 एक परे गाढ़े एक डाढ़त ही काढ़े, एक  
 देखत हैं ठाढ़े, कहैं, पावकु भयावनो ।।  
 'तुलसी' कहत एक 'नीकें हाथ लाए कपि,

अजहूँ न छाड़ै बालु गालको बजावनो' ।  
 'धाओ रे, बुझाओ रे,' कि 'बावरे हौ रावरे, या  
 औरै आगि लागी न बुझावै सिंधु सावनो' ।।18।।

18. ēka karaiṁ dhaun̄ja, ēka kahaiṁ, kāṛhau saun̄ja, ēka  
 aun̄ji, pānī pīkai kahaiṁ, banata na āvanō.  
 ēka parē gārḥē ēka ḍārḥata hīṁ kāṛhē, ēka  
 dēkhata haiṁ ṭhārḥē, kahaiṁ, pāvaku bhayāvanō..  
 'tulasī' kahata ēka 'nīkēm hātha lā'ē kapi,  
 ajahūṁ na chārai bālu gālakō bajāvanō'.  
 'dhā'ō rē, bujhā'ō rē,' ki 'bāvarē hau rāvarē, yā  
 aunrai āgi lāgī na bujhāvai sindhu sāvanō'..18..

Verse no. 5/18—Some are running helter-skelter in panic; some say 'take out the arms (so that we can fight back with this bellicose monkey)'; some become distressed due to intensity of the heat and reply 'it is not possible to come any longer'; some are not able to decide what to do; some are being dragged out of the fire half-burnt; some are standing stunned and cry out, 'the fire is very intolerable and ferocious.'

Tulsidas observes that some of the demons say—'This fellow Hanuman has taught him (i.e. the demon king Ravana) a nice lesson, but the pity is that this idiot still does not understand how things are, and he still does want to refrain himself from being arrogant and haughty'.

Some of the demons exhort others, saying—'Oh run, and put out the fire', and the listener retorts, 'have you become mad? This is a different type of fire which cannot be doused by even the ocean itself, or the rain-clouds of Sawan (the rainy season) if they pour out their entire content upon the city.'

कोपि दसकंध तब प्रलय पयोद बोले,  
 रावन-रजाइ धाए आइ जूथ जोरि कै ।  
 कह्यो लंकपति लंक बरत, बुताओ बेगि,  
 बानरु बहाइ मारौ महाबारि बोरि कै ।।  
 'भलें नाथ!' नाइ माथ चलें पाथप्रदनाथ,  
 बरषैं मुसलधार बार-बार घोरि कै ।  
 जीवनतें जागी आगी, चपरि चौगुनी लागी,  
 'तुलसी' भभरि मेघ भागे मुखु मोरि कै ।।19।।

19. kōpi dasakandha taba pralaya payōda bōlē,  
 rāvana-rajā'i dhā'ē ā'i jūtha jōri kai.  
 kahyō laṅkapati laṅka barata, butā'ō bēgi,  
 bānaru bahā'i mārau mahābāri bōri kai..  
 'bhalēm nātha!' nā'i mātha calēm pāthapradanātha,  
 baraśaiṁ musaladhāra bāra-bāra ghōri kai.  
 jīvanatēm jāgī āgī, capari caugunī lāgī,  
 'tulasī' bhabhari mēgha bhāgē mukhu mōri kai..19..

Verse no. 5/19—Then Ravana angrily summoned the dooms-day clouds, and they came in hurriedly along with all their companions. The lord of Lanka told them 'Oh clouds! Douse the fire burning Lanka with your water (torrential rains), and kill the monkey by drowning him in deep waters.' Saying, 'all right, Lord!', the clouds bowed

their heads and started pouring torrential rain and rumbled repeatedly; but (to every one's astonishment) the fire increased four-fold by the water and became more ferocious and terrible.

Tulsidas says that the clouds became so afraid (at their failure to douse the fire) that they turned on their heels and ran away.

[Note—It is pertinent to make an observation at this juncture. According to metaphysical interpretation of things, Lord Ram's 'Beej Mantra' or 'seed Mantra' (which simply means the basic mystical formula consisting of some esoteric words that relate specifically to a particular Divinity or Divine Being, and which is used in spiritual practices such as doing meditation and repetition of the Divinity's holy name as a tool to invoke the Divinity's blessings and harness the cosmic energy represented by that particular Divinity) is "Raam/Raan(g)" (i.e. it is the Sanskrit alphabet 'Ra' with a dot known as the anuswar on top). This Beej Mantra also happens to be the one for the 'fire element'. And this means that Lord Ram represents the energy of the cosmic 'fire' that is the most powerful force of creation. This fact is clear when we closely observe how Ram was born: he was born out of a pudding emerging from the pit of the fire sacrifice his father Dasrath had done to bet sons. So, Lord Ram harboured the cosmic fire in him, and no worldly water such as the rain will be able to douse it.

Now, when this cosmic spark of the fire assumed a form in the guise of Lord Ram and decided to descend upon the earth to scorch the demons to death (just like lightening from the cloud that falls upon the earth to reduce to charcoal anything upon which it lands), it needed some base to support it. And Sita was that base. Remember: Sita was born out of the earth hidden in a pitcher when her father Janak was ploughing the ground to prepare it for some religious sacrifice. So, Sita was the 'base' which was planted by Lord Ram as a ground-work to prepare for his own landing on the soil of Lanka.

Who was Hanuman and what does he symbolise? He is said to be the son of the Wind God and an incarnation of Rudra, the 11<sup>th</sup> and the most ferocious form of Shiva, the god overseeing the conclusion of creation as the third of the Trinity Gods. Fire needs 'air' to be ignited and kept alive, and the 'wind' fans its spread. Remember: Lord Ram had given a ring to Hanuman at the time of his departure for Lanka. This ring was to serve two purposes—one was as a identification tool so that Sita could know who he was, and the other was to 'send the fuse to ignite the fire by remote control'!

Say, who or what force on this small earth can put out the fire that has been ignited by the powerful cosmic spark that burns the greatest of suns like a hellish cauldron in the bowls of the universe. Say, can the petty rain coming down from the cloud with its limited stock of water douse it when it can't even water the stretch of the great sand deserts that spread on the surface of this earth at so many places?

This is the reason why the poor clouds could not douse the fire at Lanka. See also verse no. 22 below where Malyawan says essentially the same thing to Ravana.]

इहाँ ज्वाल जरे जात, उहाँ ग्लानि गरे गात,  
 सूखे सकुचात सब कहत पुकार हैं।  
 'जुग षट भानु देखे प्रलयकुसानु देखे,  
 सेष-मुख-अनल बिलोके बार-बार हैं।।  
 'तुलसी' सुन्यो न कान सलिलु सर्पी-समान,  
 अति अचिरिजु कियो कंसरीकुमार हैं'।  
 बारिद-बचन सुनि धुने सीस सचिवन्ह,

कहैं दससीस! 'ईस-बामता-बिकार हैं' ।।20।।

20. ihām' jvāla jarē jāta, uhām' glāni garē gāta,  
sūkhē sakucāta saba kahata pukāra haiṁ.  
'juga śaṭa bhānu dēkhē pralayakṛṣānu dēkhē,  
sēśa-mukha-anala bilōkē bāra-bāra haiṁ..  
'tulasī' sun'yō na kāna salilu sarpī-samāna,  
ati aciriju kiyō kēsarikumāra haiṁ'.  
bārīda-bacana suni dhunē sīsa sacivanha,  
kahaiṁ dasasīsa! 'īsa-bāmatā-bikāra haiṁ'..20..

Verse no. 5/20—The clouds themselves were getting scorched by the leaping flames of the fire that reached as high as the sky, and they felt deeply frustrated and utterly astonished. All the clouds became dry (devoid of rain) and hesitantly called out, 'We had seen all the 12 suns<sup>1</sup> as well as the fire of dooms-day, and had also witnessed the flames leaping out of the mouth of the legendary serpent called Seshnath. But we have never heard water turn into Ghee (oil, clarified butter) that would stoke the raging fire instead of putting it down! This great miracle has been performed by the son of Kesari (Hanuman).'

Ravana's ministers banged their heads on hearing the clouds, and exclaimed, 'All this is due to being opposed to God (i.e. this is the fruit of our own sins).'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>According to mythology, there are believed to be 12 cosmic suns called 'Adityas'. All of them are said to rise at the time of dooms-day to scorch the world with their combined heat.

According to Vishnu Puran, the twelve Adityas are the following—  
Dhaataa, Aryamaa, Mitra, Varun, Anshu, Bhug, Indra, Vivaswaan,  
Pushaa, Parjanya, Twashtaa and Vishnu.]

‘पावकु, पवनु, पानी, भानु, हिमवानु, जमु,  
कालु, लोकपाल मेरे डर डावाँडोल हैं।  
साहेबु महेसु सदा संकित रमेसु मोहिं  
महातप साहस बिरंचि लिन्हें मोल हैं।।  
'तुलसी' तिलोक आजु दूजो न बिराजै राजु,  
बाजे-बाजे राजनिके बेटा-बेटी ओल हैं।  
को है ईस नामको, जो बाम होत मोहूसे को,  
मालवान! रावरेके बावरे-से बोल हैं' ।।21।।

21. 'pāvaku, pavanu, pānī, bhānu, himavānu, jamu,  
kālu, lōkapāla mērē ḍara ḍāvāmḍōla haiṁ.  
sāhēbu mahēsu sadā saṅkita ramēsu mōhiṁ  
mahātapa sāhasa birañci linhēm mōla haiṁ..  
'tulasī' tilōka āju dūjō na birājai rāju,  
bājē-bājē rājanikē bēṭā-bēṭi ōla haiṁ.  
kō hai īsa nāmako, jō bāma hōta mōhūsē kō,  
mālavāna! rāvarēkē bāvarē-sē bōla haiṁ'..21..

Verse no. 5/21—Hearing his ministers' lamentation (verse no. 20), Ravana expressed surprise and said boastfully, 'Fire, Wind, Water, Sun, the Himalayas, Yam (god who

controls hell), Kaal (death personified), Indra and other Gods—all of them shiver and tremble out of my fear. My Lord is Sri Shiva (the mightiest of Gods); Vishnu, the husband of Laxmi is always afraid of me. I have even brought Lord Brahma (the Creator) under my control due to hard penances and sacrifices; he also cannot go against me. There is no Emperor above me (and besides me) in all the 3 worlds so much so that I have held captive the sons and daughters of renowned kings. Oh Malyawan (who was one of his senior ministers)! You speak like a mad-man. Who is this fellow called 'Ishwar' (God) who can afford to go against me?'

[Note—Malyawan was an elderly maternal grandfather of Ravana. He had tried to make Ravana see reason and abandon his recklessness before it was too late. His advice to Ravana was sternly rebuked, and so was the advice of all others who had tried to avoid the calamitous war. Refer to Ram Charit Manas, (a) Sundar Kand, from Chaupai line nos. 1-2 that precede Doha no. 40; and (b) Lanka Kand, from Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 48—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 49 for Malyawan's advice.]

भूमि भूमिपाल, ब्यालपालक पताल, नाक-  
पाल, लोकपाल जेते, सुभट-समाजु है।  
कहै मालवान, जातुधानपति! रावरे को  
मनहूँ अकाजु आनै, ऐसो कौन आजु है॥  
रामकोहु पावकु, समीरु सीय-स्वासु, कीसु,  
ईस-बामता बिलोकु, बानरको ब्याजु है।  
जारत पचारि फेरि-फेरि सो निसंक लंक,  
जहाँ बाँको बीरु तोसो सूर-सिरताजु है॥22॥

22. bhūmi bhūmipāla, byālapālaka patāla, nāka-  
pāla, lōkapāla jētē, subhaṭa-samāju hai.  
kahai mālavāna, jātudhānapati! rāvarē kō  
manahūṁ akāju ānai, aisō kauna āju hai..  
rāmakōhu pāvaku, samīru sīya-svāsu, kīsu,  
īsa-bāmatā bilōku, bānarakō byāju hai.  
jārata pacāri phēri-phēri sō nisaṅka laṅka,  
jahām bāmīkō bīru tōsō sūra-siratāju hai..22..

Verse no. 5/22—Then Malyawan replied, 'Of all the kings of this earth, the serpents of the subterranean world or Gods in the heaven—oh Lord of demons, who can ever think of doing harm to you? But this fire is totally different—it is Ram's anger and wrath personified, the hot wind which is blowing (to fan the flames) is the breath of Janki (Sita), and this monkey is the personification of opposition to the Lord God, his physical body being only an excuse for the retribution. This is the reason why inspite of the presence of such valiant warriors as yourself, this fellow is roaming fearlessly without any hesitation or obstruction, and burning down Lanka unhindered.'

पान-पकवान बिधि नाना के, सँधानो, सीधो,  
बिबिध बिधान धान बरत बखारहीं।  
कनककिरीट कोटि पलँग, पेटारे, पीठ  
काढ़त कहार सब जरे भरे भारहीं॥  
प्रबल अनल बाढ़ें जहाँ काढ़े तहाँ डाढ़े,  
झपट-लपट भरे भवन-भँडारहीं।

‘तुलसी’ अगारु न पगारु न बजारु बच्यो,  
हाथी हथसार जरे घोरे घोरसारहीं ।।23 ।।

23. pāna-pakavāna bidhi nānā kē, sam̐dhānō, sīdhō,  
bibidha bidhāna dhāna barata bakhārahīm.  
kanakakirīṭa kōṭi palam̐ga, pēṭārē, pīṭha  
kāṛhata kahāra saba jarē bharē bhārahīm..  
prabala anala bār̐hēm jahām̐ kāṛhē tahām̐ ḍār̐hē,  
jhapaṭa-lapaṭa bharē bhavana-bham̐ḍārahīm.  
‘tulasī’ agāru na pagāru na bajāru bacyō,  
hāthī hathasāra jarē ghōrē ghōrasārahīm..23..

Verse no. 5/23—Different types of drinks, eatables, pickles, rice, wheat and other grains and pulses, and various types of crops are burning in their storehouses. Labourers are being burnt alive in trying to remove crores (millions) of golden crowns, beds, boxes and thrones. Because of the ever increasing ferocity of the fire, all the substances and things were burnt outside even after being taken out of the houses and store-houses, and the licking flames have spread in all the houses and stores, sparing no nook or corner of the city.

Tulsidas says that neither any house could survive nor any market place or a wall was left standing. The elephants and horses got burnt (roasted) alive in their respective yards and stables.

हाट-बाट हाटकु पिघिलि चलो घी-सो घनो,  
कनक-कराही लंक तलफति तायसों ।  
नाना पकवान जातुधान बलवान सब  
पागि पागि ढेरी कीन्ही भलीभाँति भायसों ।।  
पाहुने कृसानु पवमानसों परोसो, हनुमान  
सनमानि कै जेवाए चित-चायसों ।  
‘तुलसी’ निहारि अरिनारि दै-दै गारि कहैं  
‘बावरें सुरारि बैरु कीन्हौ रामरायसों’ ।।24 ।।

24. hāṭa-bāṭa hāṭaku pighili calō ghī-sō ghanō,  
kanaka-karāhī laṅka talaphati tāyasōm.  
nānā pakavāna jātudhāna balavāna saba  
pāgi pāgi ḍhērī kīnhī bhalībhām̐ti bhāyasōm..  
pāhunē kṛṣānu pavamānasōm parōsō, hanumāna  
sanamāni kai jēnvā'e cita-cāyasōm.  
‘tulasī’ nihāri arināri dai-dai gāri kahaim  
‘bāvarēm surāri bairu kīnhau rāmarāyasōm’..24..

Verse no. 5/24—Gold melted and flowed like melted butter (ghee) on the streets in the market places. The city of Lanka appeared to be a huge boiling cauldron of gold (1).

The dead demons appeared to be various sweet dishes being fried in it and arranged in heaps (2), and Hanuman was serving his guest (the Fire God), with the help of wind (the Wind God), the most delicious of sweets and snacks, as it were (3).

Seeing this, the demonesses are cursing, ‘Oh look! This mad Ravana has made Lord Ram an enemy (and wrought this havoc on us) (4).’



रावनु सो राजरोगु बाढ़त बिराट-उर,  
 दिनु-दिनु बिकल, सकल सुख राँक सो ।  
 नाना उपचार करि हारे सुर, सिद्ध, मुनि,  
 होत न बिसोक, औत पावै न मनाक सो ॥  
 रामकी रजाइतें रसाइनी समीरसूनु  
 उतरि पयोधि पार सोधि सरवाक सो ।  
 जातुधान-बुट पुटपाक लंक-जातरूप-  
 रतन जतन जारि कियो है मृगांक-सो ॥25॥

25. rāvanu sō rājarōgu bār̥hata birāṭa-ura,  
 dinu-dinu bikala, sakala sukha rām̐ka sō.  
 nānā upacāra kari hārē sura, sid'dha, muni,  
 hōta na bisōka, auta pāvai na manāka sō..  
 rāmakī rajā'itēm rasā'inī samīrasūnu  
 utari payōdhi pāra sōdhi saravāka sō.  
 jātudhāna-buṭa puṭapāka laṅka-jātarūpa-  
 ratana jatana jāri kiyō hai mrgāṅka-sō..25..

Verse no. 5/25—Ravana was like tuberculosis that was increasing by each passing day in the chest of Viraat-Purush (the cosmic form of the Supreme God), due to which He was gradually getting emaciated and was being deprived of all peace and happiness (1).

The Gods, saints and mystics had tried all sorts of medicines and had failed to cure or relieve Him the slightest (2).

Then, on the orders of Lord Ram, the Aurvedic Doctor (a doctor who uses herbs as medicines) called Hanuman, crossed the ocean and made a special chemical remedy (a concoction) made up of the prey (Lanka), the herbs (the demons) and ashes and chemicals (of burnt gold and jewels which adorned the city) in order to cure the disease of the Viraat-Purush (3-4).

[Note—The metaphors are obvious. The Supreme Lord was feeling uneasy because of the tyranny that the cruel demon Ravana had unleashed on this world. The pain of the creatures was tormenting the Lord who could not bear it any longer. All methods adopted by the Gods and sages to control Ravana failed, so the Lord decided to call in the help of his trouble-shooter named Hanuman and asked him to do something. Hanuman went off to Lanka and made a final attempt to teach Ravana a lesson by punishing him ruthlessly so that he might relent and stop his reckless behaviour. By burning Lanka Hanuman sought to tell Ravana that he must realise the sort of pain, agony and horror he and his demons are causing to the rest of the helpless population in this world simply because they are strong and powerful and no one has the guts and the strength to oppose them. Now that he has got a first-hand taste of his own medicine, the Lord expected that Ravana would understand the pain of others, and stop his cruel actions forthwith.]

### Hanumān's Departure from Laṅkā

जारि-बारि, कै बिधूम, बारिधि बुताइ लूम,  
 नाइ माथो पगनि, भो ठाढ़ो कर जोरि कै ।  
 मातु! कृपा कीजै, सहिदानि दीजै, सुनि सीय

दीन्ही है असीस चारु चूड़ामनि छोरि कै ।।  
 कहा कहौ तात! देखे जात ज्यों बिहात दिन,  
 बड़ी अवलंब ही, सो चले तुम्ह तोरि कै ।  
 'तुलसी' सनीर नैन, नेहसो सिथिल बैन,  
 बिकल बिलोकि कपि कहत निहोरि कै ।।26 ।।

26. jāri-bāri, kai bidhūma, bāridhi butā'i lūma,  
 nā'i māthō pagani, bhō ṭhāṛhō kara jōri kai.  
 mātu! kṛpā kījai, sahidāni dījai, suni sīya  
 dīnhī hai asīsa cāru cūḍāmani chōri kai..  
 kahā kahaurṁ tāta! dēkhē jāta jyōm bihāta dina,  
 baṛī avalamba hī, sō calē tumha tōri kai.  
 'tulasī' sanīra naina, nēhasō sithila baina,  
 bikala bilōki kapi kahata nihōri kai..26..

Verse no. 5/26—After burning down Lanka and making it luster-less and life-less (blackened like lamp-black and reduced to ash), Hanuman doused his burning tail by jumping into the ocean, and then stood before Sita with folded hands and palms touching each other as a token of great respect (1)—‘Oh Mother! Please be kind to give me a token (which I can take back to Lord Ram).’

Hearing this, Sita blessed him and detaching the jewel worn in her hairs, gave it to him, and said (2)—‘Son, what can I tell you! How I am passing my days, you've seen for yourself. Your presence was a great reassurance and source of courage for me, but you speak of departing (3).’

Tulsidas says tears welled-up in her eyes and the voice choked. Seeing her pitiful condition, Hanuman consoled her in these words (4)

[Note—Refer also to (i) Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 26—to Doha no. 27; and (ii) Geetawali, Sundar Kand, verse nos. 14-15.]

‘दिवस छ-सात जात जानिबे न, मातु! धरु  
 धीर, अरि-अंतकी अवधि रहि थोरिकै ।  
 वारिधि बँधाइ सेतु ऐहैं भानुकुलकेतु  
 सानुज कुसल कपिकटकु बटोरि कै’ ।।  
 बचन बिनीत कहि, सीताको प्रबोधु करि,  
 ‘तुलसी’ त्रिकूट चढ़ि कहत डफोरि कै ।  
 ‘जै जै जानकीस दससीस-करि-केसरी’  
 कपीसु कूद्यो बात-घात उदधि हलोरि कै ।।27 ।।

27. 'divasa cha-sāta jāta jānibē na, mātu! dharu  
 dhīra, ari-antakī avadhi rahi thōrikai.  
 vāridhi bam̐dhā'i sētu aihairṁ bhānukulakētu  
 sānuja kusala kapikaṭaku baṭōri kai'..  
 bacana binīta kahi, sītākō prabōdhu kari,  
 'tulasī' trikūṭa caḍhi kahata ḍaphōri kai.  
 'jai jai jānakīsa dasasīsa-kari-kēsari'  
 kapīsu kūdyō bāta-ghāta udadhi halōri kai..27..

Verse no. 5/27—‘Mother! Have patience! Bear for another 6-7 days. The end of the enemy is near; very little time is left (1).

Alongwith his brother (Laxman) and army (of monkeys) Lord Ram will construct a bridge across the ocean and come here soon (2).’

Thus consoling Sita, bowing his head to her (and taking her leave), he jumped above Mt. Trikoot and shouted at the top of his voice (3), "Glory to Lord Ram who is like a lion as opposed to Ravana who is like an elephant."

Saying this, Hanuman leapt across the ocean, and the turbulence caused in the air due to this created waves in the ocean below (4).

{Having taken leave from Sita, Hanuman leapt back across the ocean to arrive on this side where his companions had been eagerly waiting for him.}

### Hanumān's Arrival Back at Kishkindhā

साहसी समीरसूनु नीरनिधि लंघि लखि  
लंक सिद्धपीठु निसि जागो है मसानु सो ।  
‘तुलसी’ बिलोकि महासाहसु प्रसन्न भई  
देबी सीय-सारिखी, दियो है बरदानु सो ॥  
बाटिका उजारि, अछधारि मारि, जारि गढु,  
भानुकुलभानुको प्रतापभानु-भानु-सो ।  
करत बिसोक लोक-कोकनद, कोक कपि,  
कहै जामवंत, आयो, आयो हनुमानु सो ॥28॥

28. sāhasī samīrasūnu nīranidhi laṅghi lakhi  
laṅka sid'dhapīṭhu nisi jāgō hai masānu sō.  
‘tulasī’ bilōki mahāsāhasu prasanna bhaī  
dēbī siya-sārikhī, diyō hai baradānu sō..  
bāṭikā ujāri, achadhāri mārī, jāri garhu,  
bhānukulabhānukō pratāpabhānu-bhānu-sō.  
karata bisōka lōka-kōkanada, kōka kapi,  
kahai jāmavanta, āyō, āyō hanumānu sō..28..

Verse no. 5/28—The bear king Jamvant said—‘The brave son of the Wind-God had leapt across the ocean and treated Lanka as a ‘Sidha Peeth’ (a specially blessed place which can endow success in any venture, particularly related to spiritualism). He therefore had done mystical tantrik rituals as done in a cremation ground during the preceding night (i.e. he had burnt the city during the night). [In occult forms of worship of the goddess of death, the worshipper uses the cremation ground for his rituals. Here, the metaphor is employed to imply that Hanuman had burnt Lanka in a ritualistic manner, systematically and formally.]

Seeing his immense courage and valour, the Goddess-like Sita became very pleased and blessed him with a boon. Having ruined the garden (Ashok grove), slaying the army of Akshay Kumar and then burning Lanka, Hanuman has returned to us. He has removed the sorrows of this lotus-like world and Chakravak-like monkeys by assuming the form of the rays of the sun (daylight) that symbolizes the astounding glory and majesty of Lord Ram who himself is like a sun of the Solar race<sup>1</sup>. Look, he has come back, he has come back!!’ [Chakravaks=ruddy goose]. [5/28]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Lord Ram was born in the Solar race. The lotus flower opens up during the day time and the ruddy goose also wakes up at dawn. In this stanza, Hanuman is compared to the light of the sun in as much as it is he who acted as the flag-bearer of Lord Ram's fame. Had it not been for Hanuman, neither would Sita have been found nor would the war won by Ram. Just like the rays of the sun eliminating darkness from all corners of the earth, arrival of Hanuman removed the pall of gloom and the scepter of disaster that loomed over the monkeys on this side of the ocean as they waited most eagerly looking up into the sky in the south direction as Hanuman flew in.]

गगन निहारि, किलकारी भारी सुनि,  
 हनुमान पहिचानि भए सानँद सचेत हैं।  
 बूझत जहाज बच्यो पथिकसमाजु, मानो  
 आजु जाए जानि सब अंकमाल देत हैं॥  
 'जै जै जानकीस, जै जै लखन-कपीस' कहि,  
 कूँदै कपि कौतुकी नटत रेत-रेत हैं।  
 अंगदु मयंदु नलु नील बलसील महा  
 बालधी फिरावैं, मुख नाना गति लेत हैं॥29॥

29. gagana nihāri, kilakārī bhārī suni,  
 hanumāna pahicāni bha'e sānam'da sacēta haiṁ.  
 būrata jahāja bacyō pathikasamāju, mānō  
 āju jā'e jāni saba aṅkamāla dēta haiṁ..  
 'jai jai jānakīsa, jai jai lakhana-kapīsa' kahi,  
 kūdaiṁ kapi kautukī naṭata rēta-rēta haiṁ.  
 aṅgadu mayandu nalu nīla balasīla mahā  
 bāladhī phirāvaiṁ, mukha nānā gati lēta haiṁ..29..

Verse no. 5/29—Hearing the joyful and shrill cry of Hanuman, all the assembled bears and monkeys (on this side of the ocean) looked skywards, and recognizing that he was Hanuman, they all became exuberant, exceedingly happy and euphoric as if a ship, along with its crew and passengers, has just escaped being sunk. They embraced each other in ecstasy as if they had been re-born.

Shouting 'Glory to the Lord of Janki (i.e. Ram)! Glory to Laxman! Glory to Sugriv!' all those monkeys and bears jumped gleefully and danced merrily on the sand of the ocean shore. Most valiant among them—Angad, Mayand, Neel, Nal—twisted and waved their large tails and happily made funny faces at each other.

[Note—Refer also to Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 2-6 that precede Doha no. 28.]

आयो हनुमानु, प्रानहेतु अंकमाल देत,  
 लेत पगधूरि एक, चूमत लँगूल हैं।  
 एक बूझैं बार-बार सीय-समाचार, कहैं  
 पवनकुमारु, भो बिगतश्रम-सूल हैं॥  
 एक भूखे जानि, आगें आनैं कंद-मूल-फल,  
 एक पूजैं बाहु बलमूल तोरि फूल हैं।  
 एक कहैं 'तुलसी' सकल सिधि तार्कें, जाकें  
 कृपा-पाथनाथ सीतानाथु सानुकूल हैं॥30॥

30. āyō hanumānu, prānahētu aṅkamāla dēta,  
 lēta pagadhūri ēka, cūmata lamṅūla haiṁ.  
 ēka bījhaiṁ bāra-bāra siya-samācāra, kahaiṁ  
 pavanakumāru, bhō bigataśrama-sūla haiṁ..  
 ēka bhūkhē jāni, āgēm ānaiṁ kanda-mūla-phala,  
 ēka pūjaiṁ bāhu balamūla tōri phūla haiṁ.  
 ēka kahaiṁ 'tulasī' sakala sidhi tākēm, jākēm  
 krpā-pāthanātha sītānāthu sānukūla haiṁ..30..

Verse no. 5/30—On his landing on this side of the ocean, the monkeys regarded him as their saviour, and some embraced him, while others took the dust of his feet, or kissed his tail (1).

Some asked the news of Sita, and narrating it, it appeared the tiredness of Hanuman vanished (i.e. he felt exhilarated and joyful on telling the good news to them) (2).

Some of his companion brought bulbs, roots and fruits for him, thinking that he was hungry; still others adorned his arms with flowers and showered adulations on them (3).

Some said that one on whom Lord Ram has become benign and favourable can accomplish all the tasks in this world (4).

{The party of jubilant monkeys and bears came to the Rishyamook Mountain where Lord Ram waited with Laxman and Sugriv for the news.}

सीयको सनेहु, सीलु, कथा तथा लंकाकी  
 कहत चले चायसों, सिरानो पथु छनमें ।  
 कह्यो जुबराज बोलि बानरसमाजु, आजु  
 खाहु फल, सुनि पेलि पैटे मधुबनमें ।।  
 मारे बागवान, ते पुकारत देवान गे,  
 'उजारे बाग अंगद' देखाए घाय तनमें ।  
 कहै कपिराजु, करि काजु आए कीस, तुल-  
 सीसकी सपथ महामोदु मेरे मनमें ।।31।।

31. siyakō sanēhu, sīlu, kathā tathā laṅkāki  
 kahata calē cāyasōṁ, sirānō pathu chanamēm.  
 kahyō jubarāja bōli bānarasamāju, āju  
 khāhu phala, suni pēli paiṭhē madhubanamēm..  
 mārē bāgavāna, tē pukārata dēvāna gē,  
 'ujārē bāga aṅgada' dēkhā'ē ghāya tanamēm.  
 kahai kapiṛāju, kari kāju ā'ē kīsa, tula-  
 sīsakī sapatha mahāmōdu mērē manamēm..31..

Verse no. 5/31—Then they started to move towards Kishkindha from the shore of the ocean, all the while narrating and listening to the stories of Sita's devotion, affections, pure character and pious nature vis-à-vis her sorrowful surroundings and torments she was undergoing. As a result, the distance was covered soon (without them feeling

tired). Reaching Kishkindha, Angad summoned all the monkeys and said, ‘Today, all of you eat fruits to your heart’s content!’

Hearing his orders, all the monkeys forcefully entered Madhuvan (i.e. a garden of sweet fruit trees laden with honey). Those gardeners who were beaten by excited monkeys ran to the court (of Sugriv) and complained. Showing him (Sugriv) their wounds they informed him that Angad had reduced the garden to waste. At this Sugriv exclaimed, ‘In the name of the Lord of Tulsi (i.e. Sri Ram), it appears that the monkeys have completed the assigned task. Today my mind is feeling extremely happy (which is a good omen)!’

[Note—Refer also to Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 6-8 that precede Doha no. 28—to Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 29.]

### Rām’s Magnanimous Gesture and Vibhishan’s Anointment

नगरु कुबेरको सुमेरुकी बराबरी,  
 बिरँचि-बुद्धिको बिलासु लंक निरमान भो ।  
 ईसहि चढ़ाइ सीस बीसबाहु बीर तहाँ,  
 रावनु सो राजा रज-तेजको निधानु भो ॥  
 ‘तुलसी’ तिलोककी समृद्धि, सौँज, संपदा  
 सकेलि चाकि राखी, रासि, जाँगरु जहानु भो ।  
 तीसरें उपास बनबास सिंधु पास सो  
 समाजु महाराजजू को एक दिन दानु भो ॥३२॥

32. nagaru kubērakō sumērukī barābarī,  
 biran̄ci-bud'dhikō bilāsu laṅka niramāna bhō.  
 īsahi caṛḥā'i sīsa bīsabāhu bīra tahām̐,  
 rāvanu sō rājā raja-tējako nidhānu bhō..  
 ‘tulasī’ tilōkakī samr̥d'dhi, sauēñja, sampadā  
 sakēli cāki rākhi, rāsi, jāmgaru jahānu bhō.  
 tīsarēm̐ upāsa banabāsa sindhu pāsa sō  
 samāju mahārājajū kō ēka dina dānu bhō..32..

Verse no. 5/32—Lanka was called the city of Kubera (who was the God of wealth and treasurer for the Gods). Being made of gold, it is like Sumeru (a mythological golden Mountain); it is so wonderful that it symbolises the excellent creative prowess of Brahma in a personified form (1). There, Ravana, the 20-armed demon, became a king after offering his head as sacrifice to Lord Shiva (2).

Tulsidas says that all the wealth of this world has been concentrated within its boundaries (walls), as it were, and the rest of the world was filled with the residue (3). All this wealth was given (to Vibhishan) by Lord Ram as if it were charitable alms given by the forest-bound-mendicant Lord Ram after doing austerities for three days on the shore of the ocean<sup>1</sup> (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Lord Ram had camped on the ocean’s shore for three days, requesting the ocean to give him passage. There the Lord had also consecrated a Shiva Lingam, which is a symbol of Lord Shiva. It was called ‘Rameshwaram’—literally meaning the Lord of Ram. The word has a dual meaning—for it also means ‘Shiva, whose Lord (Ish) is known as Ram’. Anyway, the Lord had performed a religious sacrifice here before he would start on the campaign for conquering Lanka. When any religious event takes place, giving charity and making alms is a part of the ritual. So, Tulsidas uses this tradition as a metaphor to indicate that Lord Ram had voluntarily

donated the entire kingdom of Lanka, which he is poised to conquer soon, to Vibhishan.

From the point of military strategy, this was a very clever step of Lord Ram. By anointing Vibhishan on the throne of Lanka even before the campaign had got off the ground and the outcome of the war was still unknown, the Lord extended to Vibhishan a bait to ensure his loyalty. Now Vibhishan had all the reasons to support Ram, because if Ravana is killed then not only will Vibhishan be able to avenge his insult but also get the trophy in the form of kingdom of Lanka. This single act of Lord Ram also meant to convey to everyone around that they should not doubt victory as it is a foregone conclusion. It also subtly warned the monkeys that they should not eye the kingdom of Lanka after victory over it because it is given to Vibhishan, and that the Lord himself had no intention of staying there once Sita was recovered. Lord Ram clearly indicated that he is not there to grab someone's property and wealth like conquerors usually do.

This episode which relates to Lord Ram giving the crown of Lanka to Vibhishan in a token manner by anointing him, and thereby granting him the richest largesse of the time has been documented in (a) Geetawali, Sundar Kand, verse nos. 39 and 43; and (b) Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Doha no. 49 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 8-10.]

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## Laṅkākāṇḍa

### The Demons' Worry

बड़े बिकराल भालु-बानर बिसाल बड़े,  
‘तुलसी’ बड़े पहार लै पयोधि तोपिहैं ।  
प्रबल प्रचंड बरिबंड बाहुदंड खंडि  
मंडि मेदिनीको मंडलीक-लीक लोपिहैं ॥  
लंकदाहु देखैं न उछाहु रह्यो काहुन को,  
कहैं सब सचिव पुकारि पाँव रोपिहैं ।  
बाँचिहै न पाछैं तिपुरारिहू मुरारिहू के,  
को है रन राखिको जौं कोसलेस कोपिहैं ॥१॥

1. baṛē bikarāla bhālu-bānara bisāla baṛē,  
‘tulasi’ baṛē pahāra lai payōdhi tōpihaiṁ.  
prabala pracaṇḍa baribaṇḍa bāhudaṇḍa khaṇḍi  
maṇḍi mēdinīkō maṇḍalīka-līka lōpihaiṁ..  
laṅkadāhu dēkhēm na uchāhu rahyō kāhuna kō,  
kahaiṁ saba saciva pukāri pāmva rōpihaiṁ.  
bām̐cihai na pāchaiṁ tipurārihū murārihū kē,  
kō hai rana rārikō jaum̐ kōsalēsa kōpihaiṁ..1..

Verse no. 6/1—Having witnessed the burning of Lanka, no one had any hope left of succour. Behind Ravana’s back, there was murmuring and even open cries of defiance bordering on revolt: ‘Most terrible bears and very huge monkeys would cover the sea with huge boulders and mountains. They would destroy the arms of (i.e. conquer) the most valiant, brave, matchless and invincible demon warriors, cover the earth by their bodies (i.e. kill them all and spread their dead bodies all over the battle-field), and in the process they would eclipse and smother to smithereen the so-called dignity and fame of Ravana who is reputed as the conqueror of the 3 worlds.’

The terrified demons wondered, ‘No one would be saved even if Vishnu (the slayer of demon Mur) and Shiva (the slayer of demon Tripura) wanted to do so. If Sri Ram becomes angry, who is strong enough to fight with him?’

Trijaṭā’s Consolation to Sitā



त्रिजटा कहति बार-बार तुलसीस्वरीसों,  
 'राघौ बान एकहीं समुद्र सातौ सोषिहैं ।  
 सकुल सँघारि जातुधान-धारि जम्बुकादि,  
 जोगिनी-जमाति कालिकाकलाप तोषिहैं ।।  
 राजु दै नेवाजिहैं बजाइ कै बिभीषनै,  
 बजेंगे ब्योम बाजने बिबुध प्रेम पोषिहैं ।  
 कौन दसकंधु, कौन मेघनादु बापुरो,  
 को कुंभकर्नु कीटु, जब रामु रन रोषिहैं' ।।2।।

2. trijaṭā kahati bāra-bāra tulasīsvarīsōṁ,  
 'rāghau bāna ēkahīm samudra sātau sōśihaim.  
 sakula samṅghāri jātudhāna-dhāri jambukādi,  
 jōginī-jamāti kālikākalāpa tōśihaim..  
 rāju dai nēvājihaim bajā'i kai bibhīśanai,  
 bajaiṅgē byōma bājanē bibudha prēma pōśihaim.  
 kauna dasakandhu, kauna mēghanādu bāpurō,  
 kō kumbhakarnu kīṭu, jaba rāmu rana rōśihaim'..2..

Verse no. 6/2—The demoness Trijata consoled the Goddess of Tulsidas (Sita) saying that Sri Ram would dry-up all the 7 seas by a single arrow. He would slay the whole of the demon clan and quench the hunger and thirst of groups of jackals, Yoginis and Kalikas (the spirits which drink blood in the battle-field using up-turned skulls as pots). He will beat a drum (declare) and show benevolent graciousness on Vibhishan by crowning him the king of Lanka. At that time musical instruments would be played in the sky (Heavens) and the Gods would be exuberant with happiness. When Sri Ram would become angry in the battle-field, then where would this fellow Ravana stand (i.e., he has no chance of victory), poor Meghnad is of no consequence, and what would insect-like Kumbhakaran do?

[Note—Trijata was an old and wise demon lady who was appointed by Ravana to keep vigil on Sita and take care of her. On the face it appears that Ravana must have appointed some cruel demoness to keep Sita tormented, but it was not so. By all accounts in all the versions of the Ramayana, Ravana had brought Sita to Lanka because he saw in her the only way to get rid of his sinful demon body as he was aware secretly that she was the Mother of the world. And credit should be given to Ravana that though externally he made all the right noises and gestures of showing disrespect to her and tormenting her, but internally he bowed his head before her and chose to appoint Trijata because he knew that this particular demoness won't be the cause of her sufferance and that she was subtly devoted to Lord Ram. In fact, when other demonesses tried to tease Sita and terrorise her, Trijata sprang to Sita's defense and shooed them away. This is clear in Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, from Doha no. 10—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 12.

We come to a very critical observation here. Ravana knew very well that there were demons and demonesses in his midst who were devoted to Lord Ram. One sterling example is his own brother Vibhishan who (i) had written the Lord's holy name on the wall of his residence, and who (ii) used to chant the holy name of the Lord the first thing in the morning. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line 8 that precedes Doha no. 5—to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 6 which clearly states these two points. It is impossible that this thing might have escaped the knowledge of the king of the city, the demon king Ravana that his brother is invoking his arch enemy under the point of his nose.

The other example is his own wife Mandodari who had tried openly to persuade him to return Sita and make peace with Lord Ram—refer: Ram Charit Manas, (i) Sundar Kand, Chaupai line 4 that precedes Doha no. 36—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 37; (ii) Lanka Kand, (a) Chaupai line 2 that precedes Doha no. 6—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 8; (b) Chaupai line 6 that precedes Doha no. 14—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 16; (c) Doha no. 35 kha—to Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 38.

Then there was Malayawan, his maternal grandfather—refer: Ram Charit Manas, (i) Sundar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-4 that precede Doha no. 40; and (ii) Lanka Kand, Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 48—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 49.

That Trijata was devoted to Lord Ram has been explicitly stated in Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 11.

Refer also to (a) Geetawali, Sundar Kand, verse nos. 47-51; and (b) Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 99—to Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 100.]

बिनय-सनेह सों कहति सीय त्रिजटासों,  
पाए कछु समाचार आरजसुवनके ।  
पाए जू, बाँधायो सेतु उतरे भानुकुलकेतु,  
आए देखि-देखि दूत दारुन दुवनके ।।  
बदन मलीन, बलहीन, दीन देखि, मानो  
मिटै घटै तमीचर-तिमिर भुवनके ।  
लोकपति-कोक-सोक मूँदै कपि-कोकनद,  
दंड द्वै रहे हैं रघु-आदित-उवनके ।।३।।

3. binaya-sanēha sōm kahati siya trijaṭāsōm,  
pā'ē kachu samācāra ārajasuvanakē.  
pā'ē jū, bam'dhāyō sētu utarē bhānukulakētu,  
ā'ē dēkhi-dēkhi dūta dārūna duvanakē..  
badana malīna, balahīna, dīna dēkhi, mānō  
miṭai ghaṭai tamīcara-timira bhuvanakē.  
lōkapati-kōka-sōka mūm'dē kapi-kōkanada,  
daṇḍa dvai rahē hairaṁ raghu-ādita-uvanakē..3..

Verse no. 6/3—Janki (Sita) respectfully and affectionately enquired of Trijata if there was any news of Sri Ram (ārajasuvana: literally meaning the 'Son of the Arayan', alluding to the noble race of the Arayans to which the royal family of Lord Ram of Ayodhya belonged).

Trijata replied, 'Yes, there is news. 'Bhānukulakētu' (Sri Ram; the stellar son of the Solar race) has constructed a bridge over the ocean and has set foot on the soil of Lanka. The ferocious demon's (Ravana's) messengers (spies) have seen all this and reported back. Their faces have become sombre and sullen, and they appear to have lost strength and hope. It appears that the darkness symbolising the gloom and distress that has been caused by the demons in all the 14 directions (i.e. all the corners or quarters of the world) is preparing to get reduced (i.e. get eliminated). Only 2 Dandas (daṇḍa dvai; a measure of time of 24 minutes each, totalling 2 days) are left before the Sun-like Sri Ram would rise on the horizon to banish the sorrows of Indra and

other God-like Chakravaks (the ruddy goose), and provide the closed buds of lotus-like army of monkeys with the thrill and excitement that they need to bloom.'

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Sundar, Chaupai line nos. 2-8 that precede Doha no. 11.

Presently, this verse of Kavitawali differs from the one of Ram Charit Manas cited herein above in the sense that in the latter case Trijata talks about a dream she had seen while in the aforesaid verse of Kavitawali she talks about the events that are currently underway and the news that has spread like wild-fire in the city of Lanka.

Another point to note is that the war is just 2 days away and the monkey army is raring to attack.]

### Jhulnā

सुभुजु मारीचु खरु त्रिसिरु दूषनु बालि,  
दलत जेहिं दूसरो सरु न साँध्यो ।  
आनि परबाम बिधि बाम तेहि रामसों,  
सकत संग्रामु दसकंधु काँध्यो ।।  
समुझि तुलसीस-कपि-कर्म घर-घर घैरु,  
बिकल सुनि सकल पाथोधि बाँध्यो ।  
बसत गढ़ बंक, लंकेस नायक अछत,  
लंक नहिं खात कोउ भात राँध्यो ।। 4 ।।

4. subhuju māricu kharu trisiru dūśanu bālī,  
dalata jēhim dūsarō saru na sām̐dhyō.  
āni parabāma bidhi bāma tēhi rāmasōm̐,  
sakata saṅgrāmu dasakandhu kām̐dhyō..  
samujhi tulasīsa-kapi-karma ghara-ghara ghairu,  
bikala suni sakala pāthōdhi bām̐dhyō.  
basata garha baṅka, laṅkēsa nāyaka achata,  
laṅka nahim̐ khāta kō'u bhāta rām̐dhyō..4..

Verse no. 6/4—He (a reference to Lord Ram), who did not use a second arrow to slay demons such as Subahu, Marich, Khar, Dushan, Trishira and Bali—can Ravana, who had abducted another person's wife because of corrupted wisdom caused by a malignant and adverse Creator who had polluted his mind and its sense of wisdom as a prelude to his elimination, ever fight with him (Lord Ram)?

[The Creator corrupted Ravana's mind so that he lost all sense of rationality and practical wisdom. The Creator instigated Ravana to steal Sita and had clouded his wisdom so much that Ravana failed to realise that he is walking into a trap in spite of many of his close associates warning him of the consequences of being stubborn and not returning her to Lord Ram because it was absolute certain that the Lord would come to free her and in the ensuing battle he, Ravana, is sure to get killed. After all, a wise king should pay heed to his advisors, for that is the way a kingdom is governed, and failure to do so leads to ruin and destruction. But no matter how hard anyone tried, Ravana won't listen.]

Remembering the deeds of Tulsidas' Lord (Sri Ram) and Hanuman, every householder of the city of Lanka (i.e. all the demons) cursed Ravana, and when the news of the construction of the bridge reached the city, they became extremely perturbed, agitated and hopeless.

The burning of Lanka by Hanuman had such a tremendous traumatic mental effect on the demon race that even though they lived in a well-protected and virtually impenetrable fort-like city of Lanka with an invincible king such as Ravana, the citizens did not dare to eat cooked rice (because they feared lighting a fire, so scared they were with a 'burning fire').

‘बिस्वजयी’ भृगुनायक-से बिनु हाथ भए हनि हाथ हजारी।  
बातुल मातुलकी न सुनी सिख का ‘तुलसी’ कपि लंक न जारी।।  
अजडूँ तौ भलो रघुनाथ मिलें, फिरि बूझिहैं, को गज, कौन गजारी।  
कीर्ति बड़ो, करतूति बड़ो, जन-बात बड़ो, सो बड़ोई बजारी।।5।।

5. 'bisvajayī' bhr̥gunāyaka-sē binu hātha bha'ē hani hātha hajārī.  
bātula mātulakī na sunī sikha kā 'tulasī' kapi laṅka na jāri..  
ajahūṁ tau bhalō raghunātha milēm, phiri būjhihai, kō gaja, kauna gajārī.  
kīrti baṛō, karatūti baṛō, jana-bāta baṛō, sō baṛō'ī bajārī..5..

Verse no. 6/5— [The residents of Lanka say]:- 'Even Parashuram, who had slayed the thousand-handed demon named Shashtraarjun and is regarded as the conqueror of the world, was restrained and timid when he faced Lord Ram (at the venue of the Lord's marriage with Sita at Janakpur). He had come to take revenge and cut the head of the person who had broken Shiva's bow (which in this case was Lord Ram), but unable to confront the Lord he had instead disarmed himself before the Lord and handed his own bow to him meekly (before retiring to the mountains to resume his austerities and penances)<sup>1</sup>.

Oh look now at this mad fellow Ravana who did not listen to the advice of even his own maternal grandfather (Malyawan)'.  
Tulsidas marvels at the foolishness of the loggerheaded Ravana that despite having witnesseth the burning of Lanka by Hanuman right under his (Ravana's) nose, he could do nothing to stop this destruction, and now he seems to behave as if nothing had ever happened when others try to reason with him and cite this burning of Lanka as a warning to come to his senses and make a compromise with Sri Ram. Ravana should pay heed to developments, for otherwise we shall all know who is an elephant and who a lion. [Tulsidas means that Ravana still had time to mend his ways and make peace with Lord Ram. If he does not do so, it will be clear very soon who is the lion and who is the elephant between the two, Lord Ram and Ravana. This alludes to the lion killing an elephant despite the latter having a larger size and a muscular robust body. Here, Lord Ram is the lion, and Ravana is the elephant.]

This fellow Ravana has great fame, great deeds, great name and great reputation in the eyes of the world, but he is a haughty, boastful and a futile chatter-box.<sup>1</sup>

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Doha no. 90 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 3-10 and Chanda line nos. 1-4.]

### Crossing the Ocean

जब पाहन भे बनबाहन-से, उतरे बनरा, 'जय राम' रदैं।  
'तुलसी' लिएँ सैल-सिला सब सोहत, सागरु ज्यों बल बारि बरैं।।  
करि कोपु करै रघुबीरको आयसु, कौतुक हीं गढ़ कूदि चरैं।  
चतुरंग चमू पलमें दलि कै रन रावन-राढ़-सुहाइ गढ़ैं।।6।।

6. jaba pāhana bhē banabāhana-sē, utarē banarā, 'jaya rāma' raḥhaiṁ.  
 'tulasi' li'ēm̐ saila-silā saba sōhata, sāgaru jyōm̐ bala bāri baḥhaiṁ..  
 kari kōpu karaiṁ raghubīrakō āyasu, kautuka hīm̐ gaṛha kūdi caḥhaiṁ.  
 caturaṅga camū palamēm̐ dali kai rana rāvana-rāḥa-suhāṛa gaḥhaiṁ..6..

Verse no. 6/6—When the stone (boulders) floated like boats, the monkeys crossed over them and landed on the shores of Lanka and chanted the glories of Lord Ram thunderously—i.e. they declared that the Lord has arrived finally. Tulsidas says that they appear glorious with trees and mountains in their hands even as the ocean appears during the rising tide (1).

Full of anger, they obey each command of Lord Ram. Playfully they have jumped on the fort of Lanka as if they will repair the bones (i.e. crush them) of Ravana by destroying the four-wings of his army in a fleeting moment (very quickly once the Lord gave them the go-ahead signal) (2).

[Note—The construction of the bridge and the crossing of the ocean by the army of Lord Ram has been described in Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 3—to Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 5.]

बिपुल बिसाल बिकराल कपि-भालु, मानो  
 कालु बहु बेष धरें, धाए किऐँ करषा ।  
 लिए सिला-सैल, साल, ताल औ तमाल तोरि  
 तोपैं तोयनिधि, सुरको समाजु हरषा ॥  
 डगे दिगकुंजर कमटु कोलु कलमले,  
 डोले धराधर धारि, धराधरु धरषा ।  
 'तुलसी' तमकि चलैं, राघौकी सपथ करैं,  
 को करै अटक कपिकटक अमरषा ॥ 7 ॥

7. bipula bisāla bikarāla kapi-bhālu, mānō  
 kālu bahu bēśa dharēm̐, dhā'ē ki'ēm̐ karaśā.  
 li'ē silā-saila, sāla, tāla au tamāla tōri  
 tōpaiṁ tōyanidhi, surakō samāju haraśā..  
 ḍagē digakuṅjara kamaṭhu kōlu kalamalē,  
 ḍōlē dharādharma dhāri, dharādharu dharaśā.  
 'tulasi' tamaki calaiṁ, rāghaukī sapatha karaiṁ,  
 kō karai aṭaka kapikaṭaka amaraśā..7..

Verse no. 6/7—Multitudes of huge and ferocious monkeys and bears ran thither as if the God of Death (Kaal) himself was running angrily to vanquish the enemy (the demons) (1).

Some lifted boulders, some held mountains, others uprooted trees, large and thick, and together they beat the ocean and heaped these things over it. [As is the habit of monkeys, they started creating havoc all around. Also, another reason was to collect the trees, boulders, rocks, small hills etc. and make them handy at the time of battle]. Seeing all this, the Gods were thrilled (2).

The elephants trembled, (the bearers of earth) the Kurma (the legendary Tortoise) and Varaaha (Boar) wriggled, the mountains shook, and Lord Shesh Nath

(the legendary Serpent) was crushed under the huge weight of the pile of trees and boulders that was collected and piled there (3).

Tulsidas says on oath that the monkeys walked smartly and arrogantly. Who is there (he wonders) to stop this angry army of monkeys? (4)

आए सुकु, सारनु, बोलाए ते कहन लागे,  
पुलक सरीर सेना करत फहम हीं।  
'महाबली बानर बिसाल भालु काल-से  
कराल हैं, रहैं कहाँ, समाहिंगे कहाँ महीं'॥  
हँस्यो दसकंधु रघुनाथको प्रताप सुनि,  
'तुलसी' दुरावे मुखु, सूखत सहम हीं।  
रामके बिरोधैं बुरो बिधि-हरि-हरहू को,  
सबको भलो है राजा रामके रहम हीं॥८॥

8. ā'ē suku, sārānu, bōlā'ē tē kahana lāgē,  
pulaka sarīra sēnā karata phahama hīm.  
'mahābalī bānara bisāla bhālu kāla-sē  
karāla haim, rahaim kahām, samāhiṅgē kahām mahīm'..  
hamśyō dasakandhu raghunāthakō pratāpa suni,  
'tulasī' durāvē mukhu, sūkhata sahama hīm.  
rāmakē birōdhēm burō bidhi-hari-harahū kō,  
sarakō bhalō hai rājā rāmakē rahama hīm..8..

Verse no. 6/8—Shuk and Sharan had returned after spying upon and reconnoitring the monkey-army to gather information about its strength and arms. Every pore of their bodies was thrilled at the thought of that formidable army. When asked (enquired) by Ravana, they reported thus: 'Most strong monkeys and huge bears are ferocious and terrible like death incarnate. No one knows where they live and where they shall hide (enter) in the earth.'

Ravana laughed derisively on hearing the glory and fame of Sri Ram. Tulsidas says that his mouth became parched out of fear, but he cunningly pretends to conceal it. [Ravana laughs to hide his internal apprehensions. He is terrified within but keeps an external appearance of defiance and nonchalance as if there was nothing serious to bother about.]

Even Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu do not benefit by antagonising (opposing) Sri Ram. Everyone has his welfare in having Sri Ram's benevolence and favourable disposition. [So, wonders Tulsidas, how ridiculous is it for Ravana to expect any good for himself and his clan if he continues to be opposed to Lord Ram when even the senior gods are averse to even imagine so?]

### Angad as Emissary

'आयो! आयो! आयो सोई बानर बहोरि!' भयो  
सोरु चहुँ ओर लंकाँ आएँ जुबराजकें।  
एक काढ़ैं सौंज, एक धौंज करैं, 'कहा ह्वैहै,  
पोच भई', महासोचु सुभटसमाजकें॥  
गाज्यो कपिराजु रघुराजकी सपथ करि,  
मूँदे कान जातुधान मानो गाजैं गाजकें।  
सहमि सुखात बातजातकी सुरति करि,

लवा ज्यो लुकात, तुलसी झपेटें बाजकें ।।९।।

9. 'āyō! āyō! āyō sō'ī bānara bahōri!' bhayō  
sōru cahum'ōra laṅkāṁ ā'ēm' jubarājakēm.  
ēka kārhaiṁ saunja, ēka dhaunja karaiṁ, 'kahā hvaihai,  
pōca bha'ī', mahāsōcu subhaṭasamājakēm..  
gājyō kapiṛāju raghurājakī sapatha kari,  
mūṁdē kāna jātudhāna mānō gājēm gājakēm.  
sahami sukhāta bātajātakī surati kari,  
lavā jyōm lukāta, tulasī jhapēṭēm bājakēm..9..

Verse no. 6/9—When the citizens of Lanka saw Angad, the prince of the monkeys, enter the city, they thought that the same monkey who had burnt the city earlier (i.e. Hanuman) has come again (1).

Some rushed for their weapons; others ran helter-skelter shouting, 'Oh! It's very bad! What will happen now, who can tell? (2).'

The demons were very upset. When Angad roared, invoking the name of Lord Ram, the demons closed their ears as if thunderbolt had struck (3). Remembering the fearful deeds of Hanuman, they became scared and hid themselves even as a bird hides when an eagle swoops down on it (4).

[Note—The episode of Angad going to Ravana as a peace emissary of Lord Ram has been well documented in (i) Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, from Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 16—to Doha no. 35; and briefly in (ii) Geetawali, Lanka Kand, verse nos. 2-4.]

तुलसीस बल रघुबीरजू कें बालिसुतु  
वाहि न गनत, बात कहत करेरी-सी ।  
'बकसीस ईसजू की खीस होत देखिअत,  
रिस काहें लागति, कहत हौं मैं तेरी-सी ।।  
चढ़ि गढ़-मढ़ दृढ़, कोटकें काँगूरें, कोपि  
नेकु धका देहैं, ढैहैं ढेलनकी ढेरी-सी ।  
सुनु दसमाथ! नाथ-साथके हमारे कपि  
हाथ लंका लाइहैं तौ रहेगी हथेरी-सी ।।१०।।

10. tulasīsa bala raghubīrajū kēm bālisutu  
vāhi na ganata, bāta kahata karērī-sī.  
'bakasīsa īsajū kī khīsa hōta dēkhi'ata,  
risa kāhēm lāgati, kahata haurṁ mairṁ tērī-sī..  
caḍhi gaṛha-marḥa dr̥ḥa, kōṭakēm kaṁgūrēm, kōpi  
nēku dhakā dēhaiṁ, ḍhaihaiṁ ḍhēlanakī ḍhērī-sī.  
sunu dasamātha! nātha-sāthakē hamārē kapi  
hātha laṅkā lā'ihaiṁ tau rahēgī hathērī-sī..10..

Verse no. 6/10—On the strength of the Lord of Tulsidas (Lord Ram), Angad, the son of Bali, does not pay any attention to Ravana's stature or fame, but says sternly, 'It appears that the wealth given to you by Lord Shiva as a boon is on the verge of ruin today—why are you angry, then? I talk of your welfare.

Oh Ravana! Listen, when the monkeys accompanying our Lord Ram would mount on the palaces of the fort and strong pinnacles of the ramparts and angrily push

them, these would crumble and collapse like a heap of rubble; and if they lay their hands on Lanka, it would be laid bare like a palm (i.e. ruined and made desolate).’

‘दूषनु, बिराधु, खरु, त्रिसिरा, कबंधु बधे  
तालऊ बिसाल बेधे, कौतुकु है कालिको ।  
एक ही बिसिष बस भयो बीर बाँकुरो सो,  
तोहू है बिदित बलु महाबली बालिको ॥  
‘तुलसी’ कहत हित मानतो न नेकु संक,  
मेरो कहा जैहै, फलु पैहै तू कुचालिको ।  
बीर-करि-केसरी कुठारपानि मानी हारि,  
तेरी कहा चली, बिड़! तोसे गनै घालि को ॥११॥

11. ‘dūśanu, birādhū, kharu, trisirā, kabandhu badhē  
tāla’ū bisāla bēdhē, kautuku hai kālikō.  
ēka hī bisiśa basa bhayō bīra bām̐kurō sō,  
tōhū hai bidita balu mahābalī bālikō..  
‘tulasī’ kahata hita mānatō na nēku saṅka,  
mērō kahā jaihai, phalu paihai tū kucālikō.  
bīra-kari-kēsari kuṭhārapāni mānī hāri,  
tērī kahā calī, bīra! tōsē ganai ghālī kō..11..

Verse no. 6/11—‘Look, he (Lord Ram) has slayed the demons Dushan, Viradh, Khar, Trishira and Kabandh; he has punctured very large palm trees by a single arrow—all these are of recent occurrence. Even you are aware of the death of the great warrior Bali—even that matchless warrior was capitulated by his single arrow. I talk of your good, but you do not fear (i.e. pay attention to good advice); how does it affects me—you will reap the fruits of your misdemeanour and misdeeds. Even Parashuram, who is like a lion for the elephant-like kings and who has an invincible and strong axe, surrendered before him—oh you wicked wretch! What ground do you stand in front of him? Who counts you even as a ‘Paasang’ (a counter-weight used in measuring scales)?’

तोसों कहौं दसकंधर रे, रघुनाथ बिरोधु न कीजिए बौरे ।  
बालि बली, खरु, दूषनु और अनेक गिरे जे-जे भीतिमें दौरे ॥  
ऐसिअ हाल भई तोहि धौं, न तु लै मिलु सीय चहै सुखु जौं रे ।  
रामकें रोष न राखि सकैं तुलसी बिधि, श्रीपति, संकरु सौ रे ॥१२॥

12. tōsōm kahaum̐ dasakandhara rē, raghunātha birōdhū na kīji’ē baurē.  
bāli balī, kharu, dūśanu aura anēka girē jē-jē bhītimēm̐ daurē..  
aisi’a hāla bha’ī tōhi dhaum̐, na tu lai milu sīya cahai sukhu jaur̐ rē.  
rāmakēm̐ rōśa na rākhi sakaim̐ tulasī bidhi, śrīpati, saṅkaru sau rē..12..

Verse no. 6/12—In the Ravana's court, Angad said, ‘Oh you 10-headed monster! I tell you truly—don’t resist Lord Ram even by mistake. Great warriors like Bali, Khar Dhusan etc. who ran on the wall, fell down.



You would also have the same fate; otherwise, if you want peace and happiness, then take Sita with yourself and go meet Lord Ram. Oh! Crores (millions) of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva cannot protect you against Lord Ram's anger.'

तू रजनीचरनाथ महा, रघुनाथके सेवकको जनु हौं हौं ।  
बलवान है स्वानु गर्ली अपनी, तोहि लाज न गालु बजावत सौहौं ।।  
बीस भुजा, दस सीस हरौं, न डरौं, प्रभु-आयसु-भंग तैं जौं हौं ।  
खेतमें केहरि ज्यो गजराज दलौं दल, बालिको बालकु तौ हौं ।।13।।

13. tūm'rajanīcaranātha mahā, raghunāthakē sēvakakō janu haum haum.  
balavāna hai svānu galīm apanīm, tōhi lāja na gālu bajāvata sauhauṁ..  
bīsa bhujā, dasa sīsa harauṁ, na ḍarauṁ, prabhu-āyasu-bhaṅga tēm jauṁ  
haum.  
khētamēm kēhari jyōm gajarāja dalaum dala, bālikō bālaku tau haum..13..

Verse no. 6/13—Angad continued, 'You are a king of demons and I am a servant (subject; assistant; subordinate; in the service of) of Sugriv who is himself a humble servant of Lord Ram. Even a dog is valiant in his own lane (i.e. in his area). Don't you feel ashamed at beating your own drum (i.e. bragging) in front of me? If I had not been afraid of breaking my Lord's orders, (which was just to make you see reason and avoid the calamitous war), I would have crushed (i.e. broken and dismembered your body of) all your 10 heads and 20 arms. Regard me as the son of Bali only when I crush your army in the battle-field like a lion crushes an elephant.'

कोसलराजके काज हौं आजु त्रिकूटु उपारि, लै बारिधि बोरौं ।  
महाभुजदंड द्वै अंडकटाह चपेटकी चोट चटाक दै फोरौं ।।  
आयस भंगतैं जौं न डरौं, सब मीजि सभासद श्रोनि त घोरौं ।  
बालिको बालकु जौं, 'तुलसी' दसहू मुखके रनमें रद तोरौं ।।14।।

14. kōsalarājakē kāja haum āju trikūṭu upāri, lai bāridhi bōrauṁ.  
mahābhujadaṇḍa dvai aṇḍakaṭāha capēṭakīm cōṭa caṭāka dai phōrauṁ..  
āyasa bhaṅgatēm jauṁ na ḍarauṁ, saba mīji sabhāsada śrōnita ghōrauṁ.  
bālikō bālaku jauṁ, 'tulasi' dasahū mukhakē ranamēm rada tōrauṁ..14..

Verse no. 6/14—'For the sake of Lord Ram's work, I am capable of uprooting this Mt. Trikoot (on which was established the city of Lanka) and dumping it into the ocean. Not only Lanka, I can smash to smithereens the entire Universe with my two arms (1); if I had not feared the curse of breaking Lord Ram's orders (not to harm you), I would have squeezed your councilors and soak them in their blood. If I am the true son of Bali, I'll break the teeth of all your 10 heads in the battle.'(2).

अति कोपसों रोप्यो है पाउ सभाँ, सब लंक ससंकित, सोरु मचा ।  
तमके घननाद-से बीर प्रचारि कै, हारि निसाचर-सैनु पचा ।।  
न टरै पगु मेरुहु तैं गरु भो, सो मनो महि संग बिरंची रचा ।  
'तुलसी' सब सूर सराहत हैं, जगमें बलसालि है बालि-बचा ।।15।।

15. ati kōpasōm rōpyō hai pā'u sabhām', saba laṅka sasaṅkita, sōru macā.  
tamakē ghananāda-sē bīra pracāri kai, hāri nisācara-sainu pacā..

na ṭarai pagu mēruhu tēm garu bhō, sō manō mahi saṅga biran̄cī racā.  
'tulasī' saba sūra sarāhata haim, jagamēm balasāli hai bāli-bacā..15..

Verse no. 6/15—Furious, Angad firmly and resolutely put down his feet in the center of the assembly. This created a furore in all the directions in Lanka, and all the demons became suspicious. Warriors like Meghnad got up with a start and challenge, tried their best to move Angad's feet and push him, but returned to their seats after being unable to move the leg even a fraction of a measure. The entire demon army charged, but the leg did not budge from its position even a fraction.

It became heavier than Mt. Sumeru as if it was grafted to the earth by Lord Brahma at the time of creation! Tulsidas says that all the warriors began to praise Angad as the only brave in this world.

रोप्यो पाउ पैज कै, बिचारि रघुबीर बलु  
लागे भट समिति, न नेकु टसकतु है।  
तज्यौ धीरु-धरनी, धरनीधर धसकत,  
धराधरु धीर भारु सहि न सकतु है।  
महाबली बालिकें दबत दलकति भूमि,  
'तुलसी' उछलि सिंधु, मेरु मसकतु है।  
कमठ कठिन पीठि घट्टा पय्यो मंदरको,  
आयो सोई काम, पै करेजो कसकतु है।।16।।

16. rōpyō pā'u paija kai, bicāri raghubīra balu  
lāgē bhaṭa samiṭi, na nēku ṭasakatu hai.  
tajyau dhīru-dharanīm, dharanīdhara dhasakata,  
dharādharu dhīra bhāru sahi na sakatu hai.  
mahābalī bālikēm dabata dalakati bhūmi,  
'tulasī' uchali sindhu, mēru masakatu hai.  
kamaṭha kaṭhina pīṭhi ghaṭṭhā paryō mandarakō,  
āyō sō'ī kāma, pai karējō kasakatu hai..16..

Verse no. 6/16—Remembering Lord Ram's strength, Angad had planted his legs on the ground. Warriors tried to lift it collectively, but could not move it an inch (1).

Even earth lost courage, mountains subsided, and most courageous Sesh Nath could not bear its (leg's) burden (2).

By the pressure exerted by the great warrior Angad, son of Bali, the earth shook, the ocean had tides, and Mt. Meru cracked (3).

The legendary tortoise could bear the burden of his legs thanks to the wart on his back (formed at the time of churning of the ocean by Gods and Demons) which bore the brunt of its pressure; otherwise, even his heart sank (4).

[Note—The episode of Angad's ambassadorial assignment has been dealt with in some details to show that (1) Lord Ram tried his best to avoid war and solve the issue peacefully; (2) that, like Hanuman in Sundar Kand, Angad had tried his best to convince Ravana to shun confrontationist attitude, but he wouldn't listen; (3) that the deeds of the two chief monkeys in Lord Ram's camp had broken the morale of Lanka's army prior to the actual start of war and thereby aiding in its defeat and total rout; and (4) disguised as messenger, they could spy and reconnoiter the opposite camp's alertness, lay-out, strength, army-armour etc., and sow a seed of dissension and anger in the citizens against their king, almost to the point of revolt.]

{Meanwhile, Mandodari, the chief queen of Ravana, made a last ditch attempt to dissuade her husband from entering a devastating war for no worthwhile reason. But she failed. Her entreaties have been beautifully narrated in Kavitawali, verse nos. 6/17—6/29. It ought to be noted that Mandodari had tried twice to persuade Ravana to desist from war. First it was before the commencement of the war, and again in the middle of it. Here we shall quote from Kavitawali, while later on from Geetawali.}

### Entreaty between Rāvanā and Mandodari

कनकगिरिसुंग चढ़ि देखि मर्कटकटकु,  
 बदत मंदोदरी परम भीता ।  
 सहसभुज-मत्तगजराज-रनकेसरी  
 परसुधर गर्बु जेहि देखि बीता ।।  
 दास तुलसी समरसूर कोसलधनी,  
 ख्याल ही बालि बलसालि जीता ।  
 रे कंत ! तू न दंत गहि 'सरन श्रीरामु' कहि,  
 अजहुँ एहि भाँति लै सौँपु सीता ।। 17 ।।

17. kanakagirisrṅga caḍhi dēkhi markṭakṭaku,  
 badata mandōdarī parama bhītā.  
 sahasabhuja-mattagajarāja-ranakēsarī  
 parasudhara garbu jēhi dēkhi bītā..  
 dāsa tulasī samarasūra kōsaladhanī,  
 khyāla hīm bāli balasāli jītā.  
 rē kanta! tṛṇa danta gahi 'sarana śrīrāmu' kahi,  
 ajahum' ēhi bhām'ti lai saumpu sītā..17..

Verse no. 6/17—Mounting the top of the 'Mountain of Gold', Mandodari beheld the army of monkeys and became terribly afraid and upset. She said to her husband Ravana, 'Parashuram was very proud of his invincibility and strength, and he had even subdued Shahastrabahu (a demon with one thousand arms) in the battle-field just like a lion subdues an elephant. But even he (Parashuram) was himself subdued when he faced the Lord of Kaushal (Ram) of whom Tulsidas is a humble servant.

Look, the same Lord as arrived on the battlefield with immense strength and powerful force. Look, he had conquered the brave and strong Bali playfully (i.e. without effort). Oh dear husband! I advise that you should even now put a straw between your teeth and take Sita and surrender her to Sri Ram, pleading 'I have come to take refuge before you'.

रे नीच ! मारीचु बिचलाइ, हति ताड़का,  
 भंजि सिवचापु सुखु सबहि दीन्ह्यो ।  
 सहस दसचारि खल सहित खर-दूषनहि,  
 पैठै जमधाम, तैं तउ न चीन्ह्यो ।।  
 मैं जो कहौं, कंत ! सुनु मंतु भगवंतसों  
 बिमुख है बालि फलु कौन लीन्ह्यो ।  
 बीस भुज, दस सीस खीस गए तबहिं जब,  
 ईसके ईससों बैरु कीन्ह्यो ।। 18 ।।

18. rē nīca! māṛicu bicalā'i, hati tāṛakā,  
 bharñi sivatāpu sukhu sabahi dīnhyō.  
 sahasa dasacāri khala sahita khara-dūśanahi,  
 paiṭhai jamadhāma, tair̥m ta'u na cīnhyō..  
 mair̥m jō kahaur̥m, kanta! sunu mantu bhagavantasōm  
 bimukha hvai bāli phalu kauna līnhyō.  
 bīsa bhuja, dasa sīsa khīsa ga'ē tabahir̥m jaba,  
 īsakē īsasōm bairu kīnhyō..18..

Verse no. 6/18—‘Oh you evil one! Have you still not recognised him who has punished Marich (by using a head-less arrow, he threw Marich beyond the ocean), killed demoness Tadka, gave pleasure to everyone by breaking the bow of Lord Shiva (at Janakpur) and then killed Khar-Dushan along with his 14 thousand strong army of demons?

Oh Lord! Listen to my advice. What fruit (benefit) did Bali get by opposing the Lord (God)? All your 10 heads and 20 arms were deemed to have been destroyed the moment you had decided to oppose and creat enmity with the Lord of Shiva (Sri Ram).’

बालि दलि, काल्हि जलजान पाषान किये,  
 कंत ! भगवंतु तैं तउ न चीन्हें ।  
 बिपुल बिकराल भट भालु-कपि काल-से,  
 संग तरु तुंग गिरिसुंग लीन्हें ।।  
 आइगो कोसलाधीसु तुलसीस जेंहि  
 छत्र मिस मौलि दस दूरि कीन्हें ।  
 ईस बकसीस जनि खीस करु, ईस! सुनु,  
 अजहुँ कुलकुसल बैदेहि दीन्हें ।।19।।

19. bāli dali, kāl'hi jalajāna pāsāna kiyē,  
 kanta! bhagavantu tair̥m ta'u na cīnhēm̄.  
 bipula bikarāla bhaṭa bhālu-kapi kāla-sē,  
 saṅga taru tuṅga girisṛṅga līnhēm̄..  
 ā'igō kōsalādhīsu tulasīsa jēnhi  
 chatra misa mauli dasa dūri kīnhēm̄.  
 īsa bakasīsa jani khīsa karu, īsa! sunu,  
 ajahum̄ kulakusala baidēhi dīnhēm̄..19..

Verse no. 6/19—‘It happened just yesterday (i.e. recently) that he (Lord Ram) had slayed Bali and constructed a float (a floating bridge) of stones on the surface of the ocean.

Oh Lord! Still you do not recognise that he is not an ordinary human but a divine Lord (Bhagwan; literally meaning Lord). With him are numerous death-like ferocious bears and monkeys, carrying huge trees and large mountains (as armaments), and who had symbolically pierced your 10 heads when his single arrow had toppled your crowns<sup>1</sup>.

Be warned. The same Lord of Tulsidas, Lord Sri Ram, has arrived. Oh Lord, listen. Do not destroy this gift (the kingdom of Lanka) which you have received from

Lord Shiva. Still your clan's welfare can be safe-guraded by sending back Sita to Sri Ram.'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This falling of the crowns refer to an incident before the start of the war. Lord Ram observed that the gem-studded golden crown of Ravana glittered and dazzled as he sat on a high pedestal in the fort of Lanka. So the Lord shot an arrow which toppled all the crowns and came back to enter his quiver. This had made Ravana convulse and squirm in frustration, anger, humiliation and dismay.]

सैनके कपिन को को गनै, अर्बुदै  
महाबलबीर हनुमान जानी ।  
भूलिहै दस दिसा, सीस पुनि डोलिहैं,  
कोपि रघुनाथु जब बान तानी ।।  
बालिहूँ गर्बु जिय माहिँ ऐसो कियो,  
मारि दहपट दियो जमकी घानी ।  
कहति मंदोदरी, सुनहि रावन! मतो,  
बेगि लै देहि बैदेहि रानी ।।20 ।।

20. sainakē kapina kō kō ganai, arbudai  
mahābalabīra hanumāna jānī.  
bhūlihai dasa disā, sīsa puni ḍōlihairi,  
kōpi raghunāthu jaba bāna tānī..  
bālihūm' garbu jiya māhiṁ aisō kiyō,  
māri dahapaṭa diyō jamakī ghānīṁ.  
kahati mandōdarī, sunahi rāvana! matō,  
bēgi lai dēhi baidēhi rānī..20..

Verse no. 6/20—'Who can count the number of monkeys in his army? Consider them equivalent to millions of brave Hanumans. When Sri Ram would mount his arrow on the bow angrily, you would forget about the 10 directions, (over which you have lordship) and your 10 heads would tremble in fear. Even Bali had boasted like you—but he was killed by him (Ram), completely ruined and crushed in the crushing machine (literally, jaws) of death.'

Mandodari continues, 'Oh Ravana! Listen to my advice. Go and give Sita back to Lord Ram soon.'

गहनु उज्जारि, पुरु जारि, सुतु मारि तव,  
कुसल गो कीसु बर बैरि जाको ।  
दूसरो दूतु पनु रोपि कोपेउ सभाँ,  
खर्ब कियो सर्बको, गर्बु थाको ।।  
दासु तुलसी सभय बदत मयनंदिनी,  
मंदमति कंत, सुनु मंतु म्हाको ।  
तौलौ मिलु बेगि, नहि जौलौ रन रोष भयो  
दासरथि बीर बिरुदैत बाँको ।।21 ।।

21. gahanu ujjāri, puru jāri, sutu māri tava,  
kusala gō kīsu bara bairi jākō.  
dūsarō dūtu panu rōpi kōpē'u sabhām',  
kharba kiyō sarbakō, garbu thākō..  
dāsu tulasī sabhaya badata mayanandini,

mandamati kanta, sunu mantu mhākō.  
 taulaum milu bēgi, nahi jaulaum rana rōśa bhayō  
 dāsarathi bīra birudaita bāmākō..21..

Verse no. 6/21—‘A single monkey (Hanuman) who came as a messenger of your enemy (Lord Ram) had ruined your Ashok garden, burnt your whole city, killed your son and went away unscathed. And his second messenger (Angad) made an angry vow in your court, humiliated you all and crushed your combined pride.’

Tulsidas says that Mandodari fearfully but earnestly pleaded with Ravana, ‘Oh you foolish Lord! Listen to my council. Before the most valorous, valiant and brave Lord Ram becomes angry in the battle-field (i.e. before it is too late), you must go and meet him (to strike a compromise deal and avoid the calamitous war).’

काननु उजारि, अच्छु मारि, धारि धूरि कीन्ही,  
 नगरु प्रजार्यो, सो बिलोक्यो बलु कीसको ।  
 तुम्हैं बिद्यमान जातुधानमंडलीमें कपि  
 कोपि रोप्यो पाउ, सो प्रभाउ तुलसीसको ।।  
 कंत ! सुनु मंतु कुल-अंतु किउँ अंत हानि,  
 हातो कीजै हीयतैं भरोसो भुज बीसको ।  
 तौलौं मिलु बेगि जौलौं चापु न चढ़ायो राम,  
 रोषि बाहु काढ्यौ न दलैया दससीसको ।।22।।

22. kānanu ujāri, acchu māri, dhāri dhūri kīnhīm,  
 nagaru prajāryō, sō bilōkyō balu kīsakō.  
 tumhair̃ bīdyamāna jātudhānamaṇḍalīmēr̃ kapi  
 kōpi rōpyō pā'u, sō prabhā'u tulasīsakō..  
 kanta! sunu mantu kula-antu ki'ēm̃ anta hāni,  
 hātō kijai hīyatēr̃ bharōsō bhuja bīsakō.  
 taulaum milu bēgi jaulaum cāpu na caṛhāyō rāma,  
 rōśi bānu kāḍhyau na dalaiyā dasasisakō..22..

Verse no. 6/22—‘You have already seen the strength, courage and valour of a single monkey (Hanuman)—he single handedly ruined your garden, killed Akshay Kumar and crushed his army and burnt the city. Even while you were present, the second monkey (Angad) had angrily and defiantly planted his foot firmly in the assembly of demons and no one could shake it—it was all the glorious effect of Sri Ram. Oh Lord! Listen to my advice—the destruction of the demon clan will be harmful to all (this shows that there were many inhabitants in Lanka, in the army, palace service, mistresses, concubines that were not demons by birth).

Hence, you should now stop depending (relying) upon the strength of your 10-arms, and before Sri Ram mounts his bow angrily and resolutely, and his arrows pierce your 10 heads, you should soon go and meet him (to surrender and make peace).’

‘पवनको पूतु देख्यो दूतु बीर बाँकुरो, जो  
 बंक गढु लंक-सो ढकाँ ढकेलि ढाहिगो ।  
 बालि बलसालिको सो काल्हि दापु दलि कोपि,  
 रोप्यो पाउ चपरि, चमूको चाउ चाहिगो ।।

सोई रघुनाथु कपि साथ पाथनाथु बाँधि,  
 आयो नाथ! भागे तें खिरिरे खेह खाहिगो।  
 'तुलसी' गरबु तजि मिलिबेको साजु सजि,  
 देहि सिय, न तौ पिय! पाइमाल जाहिगो।।23।।

23. 'pavanakō pūtu dēkhyō dūtu bīra bām̐kurō, jō  
 baṅka gar̐hu laṅka-sō ḍhakām̐ ḍhakēli ḍhāhigō.  
 bāli balasālikō sō kāl'hi dāpu dali kōpi,  
 rōpyō pā'u capari, camūkō cā'u cāhigō..  
 sō'ī raghunāthu kapi sātha pāthanāthu bām̐dhi,  
 āyō nātha! bhāgē tēm̐ khiriri khēha khāhigō.  
 'tulasī' garabu taji milibēkō sāju saji,  
 dēhi siya, na tau piya! pā'imāla jāhigō..23..

Verse no. 6/23—'You have already seen his messenger, the matchless warrior Pawansut (son of wind-God; Hanuman) who had demolished the invincible fort such as Lanka by a mere push, as it were. [This refers to the burning of Lanka].

Son of the brave Bali (Angad) had returned safely after he had angrily cast his foot firmly on the ground (which you couldn't shake) and thereby crush your haughtiness and ego. Now the same Sri Ram (whose messengers did what they did as described above) has tamed and crossed the ocean along with his monkeys and landed on the soil of Lanka.

So, oh Lord, if you contemplate on running away now, you'll have to bite dust literally. Therefore, abandon pride before it's too late and prepare to meet him, and give Sita back. Otherwise, oh dear, you will be ruined.'

उदधि अपार उतरत नहिं लागी बार  
 केसरीकुमारु सो अदंड-कैसो डाँड़िगो।  
 बाटिका उजारि, अच्छु, रच्छकनि मारि भट  
 भारी भारी राउरेके चाउर-से काँड़िगो।।  
 'तुलसी' तिहारें बिद्यमान जुबराज आजु  
 कोपि पाउ रोपि, सब छूछे कै कै छाँड़िगो।  
 कहेकी न लाज, पिय! आजहूँ न आए बाज,  
 सहित समाज गढु राँड-कैसो भाँड़िगो।।24।।

24. udadhi apāra utarata nahim̐ lāgī bāra  
 kēsarikumāru sō adaṇḍa-kaisō ḍām̐ḍigō.  
 bāṭikā ujāri, acchu, racchakani māri bhaṭa  
 bhārī bhārī rā'urēkē cā'ura-sē kām̐ḍigō..  
 'tulasī' tihārēm̐ bidyamāna jubarāja āju  
 kōpi pā'u rōpi, saba chūchē kai kai chām̐ḍigō.  
 kahēkī na lāja, piya! ājahūm̐ na ā'ē bāja,  
 sahita samāja gar̐hu rām̐ḍa-kaisō bhām̐ḍigō..24..

Verse no. 6/24—'See! That son of Kesari (Hanuman) crossed the vast ocean in no time and punished you and went back scot-free. He had laid to waste your Ashok garden, killed Akshay Kumar and other guards, and had beaten to pulp many of your great warriors; and even today, Angad had angrily planted his foot on the ground in

your presence and left you all hollow (i.e. left all your boastful claims of strength and valour sound hollow).

Oh dear! You don't have any shame! You still do not learn (or wake-up). Today Angad has thoroughly inspected all nooks and corners of the fort as if it was a prostitute's den, and you couldn't stop him!

जाके रोष-दुसह-त्रिदोष-दाह दूरि कीन्हे,  
 पैअत न छत्री-खोज खोजत खलकमें ।  
 माहिषमतीको नाथ साहसी सहस बाहु,  
 समर-समर्थ नाथ! हेरिए हलकमें ॥  
 सहित समाज महाराज सो जहाजराजु  
 बूडि गयो जाके बल-बारिधि-छलकमें ।  
 टूटत पिनाककें मनाक बाम रामसे, ते  
 नाक बिनु भए भृगुनायकु पलकमें ॥25॥

25. jākē rōśa-dusaha-tridōśa-dāha dūri kīnhē,  
 pai'ata na chatrī-khōja khōjata khalakamēm.  
 māhiśamatikō nātha sāhasī sahāsa bāhu,  
 samara-samartha nātha! hēri'ē halakamēm..  
 sahita samāja mahārāja sō jahājarāju  
 būḍi gayō jākē bala-bāridhi-chalakamēm.  
 ṭūṭata pinākakēm manāka bāma rāmasē, tē  
 nāka binu bha'ē bhr̥gunāyaku palakamēm..25..

Verse no. 6/25—(Referring to Parashuram's defeat at the hands of Sri Ram at Janakpur, Mandodari says):- 'No Kshatriyas could be found on this earth due to the wrath of his (Parashuram's) intolerable anger; oh Lord! Just think in your heart—how courageous was Sahastrabaahu, the king of Mahishmatipur. But oh Lord, that great ship-like Sahastrabaahu had sunk, along with his kin, in the ocean of Parashuram's strength. [That is, even though Sahastrabaahu was the strongest, invincible and most formidable king and warrior of his time, he could not face the fury of Parashuram and got vanquished by the latter along with his kith and kin. No one but Parashuram was able to subdue him. I (Mandodari) wish to tell you (Ravana) this thing to emphasise that Parashuram was no ordinary warrior, and he too was as proud of his valour and strength of arms as unfortunately you are. But do you not know what happened to Parashuram? Well—] It was the same Parashuram who had lost all his fame and reputation as an invincible warrior with valour and strength of arm that knew no barriers when Lord Sri Ram became slightly stern with him at the time of breaking of the bow (at Janakpur) so that finally Parashuram buckled in like a humble straw (and whereas he had come angrily determined to punish the Lord for breaking the bow of Lord Shiva, he not only surrendered meekly and bowed before Lord Ram but also gave him his own bow with which he had conquered the entire world earlier)?'

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 6 which also specifically refers to this episode of Sahastrabaahu getting killed by Parashuram.

Mandodari alludes to the incident that occurred at the time of Lord Ram's marriage with Sita where the condition set for the marriage was the breaking of an old and worn-out bow of Shiva that was kept with her father king Janak. None of the assembled competing kings and princes could break it, individually or collectively.



Then Lord Ram had very easily broken the bow as if was a sport. However, its breaking annoyed Parashuram when he got wind of it because he took it as an affront to Shiva, his patron god. Hence, Parashuram came to panting and huffing to the venue to take revenge and kill the offender. At the venue, he had jumped and yelled, but could actually do nothing more than that, conceding that no matter how hard he has tried his hand holding the battle axe refuses to oblige him (refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-3 that precede Doha no. 280).

As it usually happens with fire and anger, over time when their fury is spent they calm down! So, finally Parashuram too calmed down like a punctured balloon and meekly surrendered before Lord Ram and asked for forgiveness. {Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 284—to Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 285.}

Mandodari has cited this instance in order to persuade her stubborn husband who seemed to hell-bent on confrontation with Lord Ram, thinking that no one is stronger and more powerful than him. Ravana told Mandodari that he has conquered gods and jailed them, so what do ordinary humans and monkeys count? Ravana's boast has been narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-5 that precede Doha no. 8.]

कीन्ही छेनी छत्री बिनु छेनिप-छपनिहार,  
कठिन कुठार पानि बीर-बानि जानि कै।  
परम कृपाल जो नृपाल लोकपालन पै,  
जब धनुहाई हैहै मन अनुमानि कै।।  
नाकमें पिनाक मिस बामता बिलोकि राम  
रोक्यो परलोक लोक भारी भ्रमु भानि कै।  
नाइ दस माथ महि, जोरि बीस हाथ, पिय!  
मिलिए पै नाथ! रघुनाथ पहिचानि कै।।26।।

26. kīnhī chōnī chatrī binu chōnipa-chapanihāra,  
kaṭhina kuṭhāra pāni bīra-bāni jāni kai.  
parama kṛpāla jō nṛpāla lōkapālana pai,  
jaba dhanuhāī hvaihai mana anumāni kai..  
nākamēm pināka misa bāmatā bilōki rāma  
rōkyō paralōka lōka bhārī bhramu bhāni kai.  
nā'i dasa mātha mahi, jōri bīsa hātha, piya!  
mili'ē pai nātha! raghunātha pahicāni kai..26..

Verse no. 6/26—(Referring to Parashuram, Mandodari continues):- 'He is the slayer of kings and had cleared the earth of all kings many a times (i.e. he had killed all the kings repeatedly). He has a hard and strong battle axe in his hands, and his temperament is like that of a warrior (though his external appearance is that of a hermit).

When Lord Sri Ram weighed the pros and cons of a confrontation with him, he realised that it would be disastrous for the world. [This is because, for one, Parashuram was in the form of a hermit and fighting with a hermit would send a very negative signal to the world, and secondly since Parashuram won't be able to face Lord Ram he would vent his anger on others, running amock and killing all those

around, specially the thousands of kings and princes who had collected for the marriage ceremony at Janakpur).

So, Lord Ram showed mercy on the kings and guardians of the world (by not engaging Parashuram in a duel). Further, when Sri Ram saw that he (Parashuram) had his nose wrinkled and twitching menacingly because of the breaking of the bow, then in order to crush (remove) his (Parashuram's) ego and pride (that he was invincible), Sri Ram stopped his (Parashuram's) way to heaven. [That is, if Lord Ram would have per-chance fought and killed Parashuram in a one-to-one fight, it was sure that Parashuram's soul would have found liberation from his gross body and gone to heaven. But the Lord wanted him to live and regret and face ignominy for being unduly proud and haughty. So the Lord excused but extracted all his mystical powers in a token manner when Parashuram surrendered his own bow to the Lord, bowed his head before him and went to the mountain to do Tapa to regain his lost glory. This has been clearly affirmed in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 284—to Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 285.]

So, oh dear! Recognise that he is the same Sri Ram (as being the Lord God) and put all your 10 heads on the ground before him, fold all your 20 hands in submission and meet him (i.e., prostrate yourself before him and ask for forgiveness).'

कह्यो मतु मातुल, बिभीषनहूँ बार-बार,  
 आँचरु पसार पिय! पायँ लै-लै हौं परी।  
 बिदित बिदेहपुर नाथ! भृगुनाथगति,  
 समय सयानी कीन्ही जैसी आइ गौं परी॥  
 बायस, बिराध, खर, दूषन, कबन्ध, बालि,  
 बैर रघुबीरकें न पूरी काहूकी परी।  
 कन्त बीस लोयन बिलोकिए कुमन्तफलु,  
 ख्याल लंका लाई कपि राँड़की-सी झोपरी॥27॥

27. kahyō matu mātula, bibhīśanahūṁ bāra-bāra,  
 āṁcaru pasāra piya! pāyam' lai-lai haum parī.  
 bidita bidēhapura nātha! bhr̥gunāthagati,  
 samaya sayānī kīnhī jaisī ā'i gaum parī..  
 bāyasa, birādha, khara, dūsana, kabandha, bāli,  
 baira raghubīrakēm na pūrī kāhūkī parī.  
 kanta bīsa lōyana bilōki'ē kumantaphalu,  
 khyāla laṅkā lā'ī kapi rām'ṛakī-sī jhōparī..27..

Verse no. 6/27—'Your maternal uncle (Marich) advised you; Vibhishan repeatedly asked you, and oh dear, even I had begged you again and again, falling at your feet, that you should not oppose God.

Oh Lord! What was the fate of Parashuram at Janakpur is evident to all. [Hence you should not hesitate thinking that it would be inappropriate to surrender now after first creating enmity]. He (Parashuram) was clever enough to adapt himself to changed circumstances (and wise enough to surrender before Sri Ram). Jayant (the crow), Viradh, Khar, Dushan, Bali, Kabandh—none succeeded by opposing Lord Ram.

Oh Lord! The results of your evil thoughts are there before your twenty eyes to see that the monkey (Hanuman) playfully burnt Lanka as if it was a destitute whore's hut.'

राम सों सामु किँ नितु है हितु, कोमल काज न कीजिए टाँठे।  
आपनि सूझि कहौ,पिय! बूझिए, जूझिबे जोगु न ठहरु, नाठे।।  
नाथ! सुनी भृगुनाथकथा, बलि बालि गए चलि बातके साँठे।  
भाइ बिभीषनु जाइ मिल्यो, प्रभु आइ परे सुनि सायर काँठे।।28।।

28. rāma sōm sāmu ki'ēm' nitu hai hitu, kōmala kāja na kiji'ē tāmṭhē.  
āpani sūjhi kahaum,piya! būjhi'ē, jūjhibē jōgu na ṭāharu, nāṭhē..  
nātha! sunī bhrgunāthakathā, bali bālī ga'ē cali bātakē sāmṭhēm.  
bhā'i bibhīsanu jā'i milyō, prabhu ā'i parē suni sāyara kāmṭhēm..28..

Verse no. 6/28—'It is always beneficial to make-up (i.e., to befriend) with Sri Ram. Do not unnecessarily make difficult what is so simple a task. Oh dear! I tell you what I think is proper. Understand and realise it properly that this is the opportunity to withdraw, and not a proper place and circumstance to fight (i.e., make war). Oh Lord! You have already heard the story of Brighunath (Parashuram). The strong Bali ruined himself due to his ego. Your brother Vibhishan has also joined him (Sri Ram). Oh Lord! I hear that he has crossed the ocean and pitched his camp near the sea-shore.'

पालिबेको कपि-भालु-चमू जम काल करालहुको पहरी है।  
लंक-से बंक महा गढ़ दुर्गम ढाहिबे-दाहिबेको कहरी है।।  
तीतर-तोम तमीचर-सेन समीरको सूनु बड़ो बहरी है।  
नाथ! भलो रघुनाथ मिलें रजनीचर-सेन हिउँ हहरी है।।29।।

29. pālibēkō kapi-bhālu-camū jama kāla karālahukō paharī hai.  
laṅka-sē baṅka mahā garha durgama ḍhāhibē-dāhibēkō kaharī hai..  
tītara-tōma tamīcara-sēna samīrakō sūnu baṛō baharī hai.  
nātha! bhalō raghunātha milēm rajanīcara-sēna hi'ēm' haharī hai..29..

Verse no. 6/29—'Oh Lord! The son of Wind-God (Hanuman) can protect the army of monkeys and bears even against Yam and the terrible Kaal (God of death and hell, and Death itself), he is very mischievous (i.e., active, restless) in destroying the impregnable fort of Lanka. He is like a huge falcon for destroying the partridge-like army of demons.

Oh Lord! It is wise to meet and make friendship with Sri Ram now, for the demon army's morale has been broken and it's shuddering in its heart.'

### The Demon-Monkey War

रोष्यो रन रावनु, बोलाय बीर बानइत,  
जानत जे रीति सब संजुग समाजकी।  
चली चतुरंग चमू, चपरि हने निसान,

सेना सराहन जोग रातिचराजकी ।।  
 तुलसी बिलोकि कपि-भालु किलकत  
 ललकत लखि ज्यों कँगाल पातरी सुनाजकी ।  
 रामरुख निरखि हरष्यो हिथँ हनूमानु,  
 मानो खेलवार खोली सीसताज बाजकी ।।30 ।।

30. rōśyō rana rāvanu, bōlāya bīra bāna'ita,  
 jānata jē rīti saba sañjuga samājakī.  
 calī caturaṅga camū, capari hanē nisāna,  
 sēnā sarāhana jōga rāticararājakī..  
 tulasī bilōki kapi-bhālu kilakata  
 lalakata lakhi jyōm kamḡāla pātari sunājakī.  
 rāmarukha nirakhi haraśyō hiyam' hanūmānu,  
 mānō khēlavāra khōlī sīsataja bājakī..30..

Verse no. 6/30—Then Ravana angrily summoned very famous and able warriors who were experts in the art of warfare. All the four arms of the demon army (infantry, armour, cavalry and elephants) started for the battle-front as the war-drums suddenly sounded the battle-cry, chillingly and loudly. The demon army of Ravana looked most magnificent and awe-inspiring at that moment.

Tulsidas says that seeing them, the monkeys and bears laughed derisively and merrily as if beggars greedily look at platters full of delicious food. On a signal from Lord Ram, Hanuman became excited as if a hunter had opened the cage of the falcon (and given it freedom to hunt its prey).

[Note—The war between the monkey army and the demon army has been described in detail also in Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 39—to Doha no. 103.]

साजि कै सनाह-गजगाह सउछाह दल,  
 महाबली धाए बीर जातुधान धीरके ।  
 इहाँ भालु-बंदर बिसाल मेरु-मंदर-से  
 लिए सैल-साल तोरि नीरनिधितीरके ।।  
 तुलसी तमकि-ताकि भिरे भारी जुद्ध क्रुद्ध,  
 सेनप सराहे निज निज भट भीरके ।  
 रुंडनके झुंड झूमि-झूमि झुकरे-से नाचै,  
 समर सुमार सूर मारै रघुबीरके ।।31 ।।

31. sāji kai sanāha-gajagāha sa'uchāha dala,  
 mahābalī dhā'ē bīra jātudhāna dhīrakē.  
 ihām' bhālu-bandara bisāla mēru-mandara-sē  
 li'ē saila-sāla tōri nīranidhitīrakē..  
 tulasī tamaki-tāki bhirē bhārī jud'dha krud'dha,  
 sēnapa sarāhē nija nija bhata bhīrakē.  
 ruṇḍanakē jhuṇḍa jhūmi-jhūmi jhukarē-sē nācaim,  
 samara sumāra sūra māraim raghubīrakē..31..

Verse no. 6/31—The courageous Ravana's great warriors advanced armed with shields and supported by war-elephants (1).

Here, large monkeys, who were as huge as Mt. Sumeru and Mt. Mandar, uprooted mountains and Shal Trees from near the sea shore (2).

Tulsidas says that then both the groups, full of anger, faced each other, and roaring loudly clashed with each other furiously. The commanders encouraged the warriors under their respective commands (3).

The bodies, whose heads were cut (headless trunks) begin to totter and swoon but refused to fall, so excited was their blood; and Lord Ram's champion warriors began to hit hard at the enemy in the battle (4).

तीखे तुरंग कुरंग सुरंगनि साजि चढ़े छँटे छैल छबीले ।  
भारी गुमान जिन्हें मनमें, कबहुँ न भए रनमें तन ढीले ॥  
तुलसी लखि कै गज केहरि ज्यों झपटे, पटके सब सूर सलीले ।  
भूमि परे भट भूमि कराहत, हाँकि हने हनुमान हठीले ॥३२॥

32. tīkhē turaṅga kuraṅga suraṅgani sāji caṛhē chamṭi chaila chabīlē.  
bhārī gumāna jinhēm manamēm, kabahūṁ na bha'e ranamēm tana ḍhīlē..  
tulasī lakhi kai gaja kēhari jyōm jhapaṭē, paṭakē saba sūra salīlē.  
bhūmi parē bhaṭa bhūmi karāhata, hāmki hanē hanumāna haṭhīlē..32..

Verse no. 6/32—Those who were very proud of their bravery and courage, whose bodies never relaxed (i.e. were ever eager to fight and engage themselves in robust activity)—such warriors mounted horses as swift as deer. Fully prepared to go into battle, the cavalry brigade charged. (1)

Tulsidas says even as a lion leaps at an elephant at the sight of it, so did Hanuman leapt forward and playfully began to knock the cavalry down, and they swooned, fell to the ground and wailed. This way the adamant Hanuman started slaying the demons by repeatedly challenging them. (2)

सूर सँजोइल साजि सुबाजि, सुसेल धरै बगमेल चले हैं ।  
भारी भुजा भारी, भारी सरीर, बली बिजयी सब भाँति भले हैं ॥  
'तुलसी' जिन्ह धाएँ धुकै धरनी, धरनीधर धौर धकान हले हैं ।  
ते रन-तीक्खन लक्खन लाखन दानि ज्यों दारिद दाबि दले हैं ॥३३॥

33. sūra samjō'ila sāji subāji, susēla dharaim bagamēla calē hairm.  
bhārī bhujā bhārī, bhārī sarīra, balī bijayī saba bhāmṭi bhalē hairm..  
'tulasī' jinha dhā'em dhukai dharanī, dharanīdhara dhaura dhakāna halē hairm.  
tē rana-tikkhana lakkhana lākhana dāni jyōm dārida dābi dalē hairm..33..

Verse no. 6/33—Famous and valiant warriors mounted decorated horses, were armed with sharp spears, and rode to the battle in close formation. They had big muscular arms and well-built bodies, and they appeared attractive, brave and victorious by all means. (1)

Tulsidas says that lakhs of artful and witty warriors, who shook the earth when they ran and the mountains swayed when pushed by them, were defeated and destroyed by Laxman in the battle-field as if a great donor eliminates poverty by immense charity. (2)

गहि मंदर बंदर-भालु चले, सो मनो उनये घन सावनके ।  
 'तुलसी' उत झुंड प्रचंड झुके, झपटै भट जे सुरदावनके ।।  
 बिरुझे बिरुदैत जे खेत अरे, न टरे हठि बैरु बढावनके ।  
 रन मारि मची उपरी-उपरा भलै बीर रघुप्पति रावनके ।।34।।

34. gahi mandara bandara-bhālu calē, sō manō unayē ghana sāvanakē.  
 'tulasī' uta jhuṇḍa pracaṇḍa jhukē, jhapaṭaim̐ bhaṭa jē suradāvanakē..  
 birujhē birudaita jē khēta arē, na ṭarē haṭhi bairu baṛhāvanakē.  
 rana māri macī uparī-uparā bhalēm̐ bīra raghuppati rāvanakē..34..

Verse no. 6/34—The monkeys and bears charged forward, armed with mountains in their hands. The two armies looked like two huge banks of thick black clouds appearing on the horizon simultaneously.

Tulsidas says that at the same time, the multitudes of demons who could instill fear in the hearts of Gods, also charged and yelled.

Numerous famed warriors of Ravana, who had stood staunchly in the battle-field, clashed with each other because they were literally itching for a fight with anyone who came their way. They were stubborn and resolute, and refused to move or yield their ground. The warriors of Ram and Ravana crowded and swirled around each other as furious and no-holds-barred battle ensued.

सर-तोमर सेलसमूह पँवारत, मारत बीर निसाचरके ।  
 इत तैं तरु-ताल-तमाल चले, खर खंड प्रचंड महीधरके ।।  
 'तुलसी' करि केहरिनादु भिरे भट, खग्ग खगे, खपुआ खरके ।  
 नख-दंतन सों भुजदंड बिहंडत, मुंडसों मुंड परे झरके ।।35।।

35. sara-tōmara sēlasamūha pamvārata, mārata bīra nisācarakē.  
 ita tēm̐ taru-tāla-tamāla calē, khara khaṇḍa pracaṇḍa mahīdharakē..  
 'tulasī' kari kēharinādu bhirē bhaṭa, khagga khagē, khapu'ā kharakē.  
 nakha-dantana sōm̐ bhujadaṇḍa bihaṇḍata, muṇḍasōm̐ muṇḍa parē  
 jharakē..35..

Verse no. 6/35—Ravana's warriors are using arrows, spikes and mountains for the attack, and on this side (Ram's side) they are being repulsed with uprooted Tal and Tamaal Trees (both having stout and long stems), and large boulders which are sharp and pointed. (1)

Tulsidas says all the warriors roared like a lion and clashed. The brave plunged in the sea of swords while the cowards stealthily slithered away. The monkeys are piercing the arrows of the demons with their teeth and claws, while the severed heads of the brave lie on the ground and insult each other. (2)

रजनीचर-मत्तगयंद-घटा बिघटै मृगराजके साज लरै ।  
 झपटै भट कोटि महीं पटकै, गरजै, रघुबीरकी सौह करै ।।  
 'तुलसी' उत हाँक दसाननु देत, अचेत भे बीर, को धीर धरै ।  
 बिरुझो रन मारुतको बिरुदैत, जो कालहु कालुसो बूझि परै ।।36।।

36. rajanīcara-mattagayanda-ghaṭā bighaṭai mrgarājakē sāja larai.  
jhapaṭai bhaṭa kōṭi mahīm paṭakai, garajai, raghubīrakī saunha karai..  
'tulasi' uta hāmīka dasānanu dēta, acēta bhē bīra, kō dhīra dharai.  
birujhō rana mārutakō birudaita, jō kālahu kālusō bījhi parai..36..

Verse no. 6/36—Hanuman destroys the demon army like a lion amongst mad and wild elephants. [A single lion can create havoc in a group of wild elephants. Hanuman is compared to this lion.] He leaps and dashes numerous warriors to the ground and raises the cry of Lord Ram's name (1).

Tulsidas says Ravana raises war cries from the opposite side, hearing which the monkeys become unconscious out of fear- who can have courage to withstand that ferocious challenge of Ravana? The champion-of-all Hanuman, seeing the monkeys unconscious and losing ground against the enemy, rushed and crashed in the enemy so furiously that even the God of death trembled out of fear (2).

जे रजनीचर बीर बिसाल, कराल बिलोकत काल न खाए ।  
ते रन-रोर कपीसकिसोर बड़े बरजोर परे फग पाये ।।  
लूम लपेटि, अकास निहारि कै, हौंकि हठी हनुमान चलाए ।  
सूखि गे गात, चले नभ जात, परे भ्रमबात, न भूतल आए ।।37 ।।

37. jē rajanīcara bīra bisāla, karāla bilōkata kāla na khā'ē.  
tē rana-rōra kapīsakisōra baṛē barajōra parē phaga pāyē..  
lūma lapēṭi, akāsa nihāri kai, hāmīki haṭhī hanumāna calā'ē.  
sūkhi gē gāta, calē nabha jāta, parē bhramabāta, na bhūtala ā'ē..37..

Verse no. 6/37—Those huge, war-hardened and brave demon warriors whom even death could not eat (i.e. kill) out of fear of their ferocity (death was afraid to go near them), were caught by the son of Kesari (Hanuman) in his trap, who challenged them contemptibly, and then coiling them in his tail, he flung them skywards. The demons' bodies shriveled (shrank) in fear and they kept on flying upwards (as if caught in a tornado and sucked upwards or moved upwards in a spiral of air), and they never returned to earth (it is said that the comets and other cosmic debris originated from this incident).

जो दससीसु महीधर ईसको बीस भुजा खुलि खेलनिहारो ।  
लोकप, दिग्गज, दानव, देव सबै सहमे सुनि साहसु भारो ।।  
बीर बड़ो बिरुदैत बली, अजहूँ जग जागत जासु पँवारो ।  
सो हनुमान हन्यो मुठिकाँ गिरि गो गिरिराजु ज्योँ गाजको मारो ।।38 ।।

38. jō dasasīsu mahīdhara īsakō bīsa bhuja khuli khēlanihārō.  
lōkapa, diggaja, dānava, dēva sabai sahamē suni sāhasu bhārō..  
bīra baṛō birudaita balī, ajahūṁ jaga jāgata jāsu paṁvārō.  
sō hanumāna han'yō muṭhikām' giri gō girirāju jyōm gājakō mārō..38..

Verse no. 6/38—Ravana, who could uproot the abode of Lord Shiva, Mt. Kailash, with his 20 arms and play with it unhindered and without qualms; even the Gods, demons and guardians of all the directions of the Universe (Dikpals) were afraid of

whose strength and courage (1); who was very brave and immensely courageous and whose fame is still being sung in the world, the same Ravana fell to the ground on being punched by the clenched fists of Hanuman as if a huge mountain crashes on being hit by thunderbolt (2).

दुर्गम दुर्ग, पहारतें भारे, प्रचंड महा भुजदंड बने हैं।  
लक्खमें पक्खर, तिक्खन तेज, जे सूरसमाजमें गाज गने हैं॥  
ते बिरुदैत बली रनबाँकुरे हाँकि हठी हनुमान हने हैं।  
नामु लै रामु देखावत बंधुको घूमत घायल घायँ घने हैं॥३९॥

39. durgama durga, pahāratēm bhārē, pracaṇḍa mahā bhujadaṇḍa banē  
haim.  
lakkhamēm pakkhara, tikkhana tēja, jē sūrasamājamēm gāja ganē haim..  
tē birudaita balī ranabāṁkurē hāmki haṭhī hanumāna hanē haim.  
nāmu lai rāmu dēkhāvata bandhukō ghūmata ghāyala ghāyam'ghanē  
haim..39..

Verse no. 6/39—Those demon warriors, whose arms are more invincible than an impregnable fortress and are larger than mountains, those who are ace among countless warriors and whose valour and energy are very famous and matchless, and those who are considered as 'lightening' among the society of warriors—all those famous veterans, war-hardened, valorous, valiant and brave demon warriors were slayed by a stubborn Hanuman. Some of them who did not die, but were seriously wounded and roamed in the battle-field, were shown to Laxman by Lord Ram and identified by their individual names. [This shows that Lord Ram was well acquainted with the individual commanders, senior warriors and braves of the demon army.]

हाथिन सों हाथी मारे, घोरेसों सँघारे घोरे,  
रथनि सों रथ बिदरनि बलवानकी।  
चंचल चपेट, चोट चरन चकोट चाहें,  
हहरानी फौजें भहरानी जातुधानकी॥  
बार-बार सेवक-सराहना करत रामु,  
'तुलसी' सराहै रीति साहेब सुजानकी।  
लाँबी लूम लसत, लपेटि पटकत भट,  
देखौ देखौ, लखन! लरनि हनुमानकी॥४०॥

40. hāthina sōm hāthī mārē, ghōrēsōm sam'ghārē ghōrē,  
rathani sōm ratha bidarani balavānakī.  
caṇcala capēṭa, cōṭa carana cakōṭa cāhēm,  
haharānī phaujēm bhaharānī jātudhānakī..  
bāra-bāra sēvaka-sarāhanā karata rāmu,  
'tulasi' sarāhai rīti sāhēba sujānakī.  
lām̐bī lūma lasata, lapēṭi paṭakata bhaṭa,  
dēkhau dēkhau, lakhana! larani hanumānakī..40..



Verse no. 6/40—Hanuman dashed elephants against elephants, killed horses by swinging other horses against them, crashed chariots against chariots and broke them into splinters (1). The demon army staggered and swooned when it was punched, bitten, kicked and thrashed by Hanuman (2).

Lord Ram again and again (repeatedly) praised the astounding valour and the magnificent feats of Hanuman, and said, 'Look, Laxman! Just have a look at the expertise in war of dear Hanuman. How marvelous his tail looks, by which he entraps the demons and dashes them against the ground.'

Tulsidas also praises the affection of his Lord towards his devoted servants (Hanuman) (3-4).

दबकि दबोरे एक, बारिधिमें बोरे एक,  
मगन महीमें, एक गगन उड़ात हैं।  
पकरि पछारे कर, चरन उखारे एक,  
चीरि-फारि डारे, एक मीजि मारे लात हैं॥  
'तुलसी' लखत, रामु, रावनु, बिबुध, बिधि,  
चक्रपानि, चंडीपति, चंडिका सिहात हैं।  
बड़े-बड़े बानइत बीर बलवान बड़े,  
जातुधान, जूथप निपाते बातजात हैं॥41॥

41. dabaki dabōrē ēka, bāridhimēm bōrē ēka,  
magana mahīmēm, ēka gagana urāta haiṁ.  
pakari pachārē kara, carana ukhārē ēka,  
cīri-phāri dārē, ēka mīji mārē lāta haiṁ..  
'tulasī' lakhata, rāmu, rāvanu, bibudha, bidhi,  
cakrapāni, caṇḍīpati, caṇḍikā sihāta haiṁ.  
barē-barē bāna'ita bīra balavāna barē,  
jātudhāna, jūthapa nipātē bātajāta haiṁ..41..

Verse no. 6/41—He (Hanuman) squeezed someone stealthily, drowned some in the ocean, buried others in the earth, flung some in the air (1), dashed someone by the hands, tore the legs from the trunk of still others, lacerated and tore-apart the flesh here and ground some one with his legs there (2).

Tulsidas says that, watching him in action, Lord Ram, Ravana, Gods, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Chandi began to praise him and his skills in their hearts (3).

Hanuman killed the great commanders and the famed warriors of the demon army (4).

प्रबल प्रचंड बरिबंड बाहुदंड बीर  
धाए जातुधान, हनुमानु लियो घेरि कै।  
महाबलपुंज कुंजरारि ज्यो गरजि, भट  
जहाँ-तहाँ पटके लँगूर फेरि-फेरि कै।  
मारे लात, तोरे गात, भागे जात हाहा खात,  
कहैं, 'तुलसीस ! राखि' रामकी सौं टेरि कै।  
ठहर-ठहर परे, कहरि-कहरि उठैं,  
हहरि-हहरि हरु सिद्ध हँसे हेरि कै॥42॥

42. prabala pracaṇḍa baribaṇḍa bāhudaṇḍa bīra  
dhā'e jātudhāna, hanumānu liyō ghēri kai.  
mahābalapuṁja kuṇḍarāri jyōm garaji, bhaṭa  
jahām'tahām'paṭakē lamgūra phēri-phēri kai.  
mārē lāta, tōrē gāta, bhāgē jāta hāhā khāta,  
kahaim, 'tulasīsa! rākhi' rāmakī saum tēri kai.  
ṭhahara-ṭhahara parē, kahari-kahari uṭhaim,  
hahari-hahari haru sid'dha hamśē hēri kai..42..

Verse no. 6/42—Then, those demons whose arm's strength were very potent and violent and others who were very brave, strong and ferocious, rushed forward and surrounded Hanuman on all sides. But Hanuman, who was a fountain of immense valour and bravery, roared like a lion and dashed those demon warriors to the ground everywhere by swinging his stern tail repeatedly. He broke and crushed the bones of the demons by his kicks and blows. They ran away pleading and crying in plight, and invoking the name of Lord Ram, they beseeched Hanuman to spare them and protect them. Lying scattered here and there, they moaned in agony and tried to raise themselves; Lord Shiva and mystics laughed heartily on seeing their condition.

जाकी बाँकी बीरता सुनत सहमत सूर,  
जाकी आँच अबहूँ लसत लंक लाह-सी ।  
सोई हनुमान बलवान बाँको बानइत,  
जोहि जातुधान-सेना चल्थो लेत थाह-सी ।।  
कंपत अकंपन, सुखाय अतिकाय काय,  
कुंभऊकरन आइ रह्यो पाइ आह-सी ।  
देखें गजराज मृगराजु ज्यो गरजि धायो,  
बीर रघुबीरको समीरसूनु साहसी ।।43 ।।

43. jākī bāmīkī bīratā sunata sahamata sūra,  
jākī ām̐ca abahūm̐ lasata laṅka lāha-sī.  
sō'i hanumāna balavāna bāmīkō bāna'ita,  
jōhi jātudhāna-sēnā calyō lēta thāha-sī..  
kampata akampana, sukhāya atikāya kāya,  
kumbha'ūkarana ā'i rahyō pā'i āha-sī.  
dēkhēm gajarāja mrgarāju jyōm garaji dhāyō,  
bīra raghubīrakō samīrasūnu sāhasī..43..

Verse no. 6/43—He, hearing whose peerless bravery even brave warriors feel afraid (to face him) and Lanka appears like red hot ambers from the fire which he had ignited—the same brave and strong Hanuman moved about, as if trying to measure the strength of the demons' army. At that moment, Ravana's son 'Akampan' (literally meaning one who never shakes) began to tremble and shake (out of fear), the body of 'Atikaya' (literally one who has an extra large body) shriveled and shrunk, and even Kumbhakaran came and exclaimed in surprise, and felt dejected. Like a lion rushes towards a herd of elephants, Lord Ram's brave and courageous son of Pawan (Hanuman) roared and rushed at them immediately on sighting them.

मत्त-भट-मुकुट, दसकंठ-साहस-सइल-  
 सुंग-बिदरनि जनु बज्र-टाँकी ।  
 दसन धरि धरनि चिक्करत दिग्गज, कमटु,  
 सेषु संकुचित, संकित पिनाकी ।।  
 चलत महि-मेरु, उच्छलत सायर सकल,  
 बिकल बिधि बधिर दिसि-बिदिसि झाँकी ।  
 रजनिचर-घरनि घर गर्भ-अर्भक स्रवत,  
 सुनत हनुमानकी हाँक बाँकी ।। 44 ।।

44. matta-bhaṭa-mukūṭa, dasakaṇṭha-sāhasa-sa'ila-  
 sṛṅga-biddarani janu bajra-ṭāmkī.  
 dasana dhari dharani cikkarata diggaja, kamaṭhu,  
 sēśu saṅkucita, saṅkita pinākī..  
 calata mahi-mēru, ucchalata sāyara sakala,  
 bikala bidhi badhira disi-bidisi jhāmķī.  
 rajanicara-gharani ghara garbha-arbhaka òvata,  
 sunata hanumānakī hāmķa bāmķī..44..

Verse no. 6/44—Hearing the terrible war-cry of Hanuman—who is like the strike of Bajra (thunderbolt) for crushing the pinnacle of the mountain representing the strength of Ravana, who is the most exalted among the furious and wild demon warriors—the Dignals (custodians of the directions) clasped the earth in their teeth and shrieked; the legendary tortoise and serpent wriggled, squirmed and shriveled out of fear; Lord Shiva became doubtful; the earth and Mt. Sumeru became uneasy and shook; all the seven seas heaved, bounced, buffeted and splashed; Brahma became agitated, worried and nervous and started peering in all the directions (to ascertain the fate of his creation); and the pregnant demonesses aborted in all the house-holds of Lanka.

कौनकी हाँकपर चौक चंडीसु, बिधि,  
 चंडकर थकित फिरि तुरग हाँके ।  
 कौनके तेज बलसीम भट भीम-से  
 भीमता निरखि कर नयन ढाँके ।।  
 दास-तुलसीसके बिरुद बरनत बिदुष,  
 बीर बिरुदैत बर बैरि धाँके ।  
 नाक नरलोक पाताल कोउ कहत किन  
 कहाँ हनुमानु-से बीर बाँके ।। 45 ।।

45. kaunakī hāmķapara cauṅka caṇḍīsu, bidhi,  
 caṇḍakara thakita phiri turaga hāmķē.  
 kaunakē tēja balasīma bhaṭa bhīma-sē  
 bhīmatā nirakhi kara nayana ḍhāmķē..  
 dāsa-tulasīsakē biruda baranata biduśa,  
 bīra birudaita bara bairi dhāmķē.  
 nāka naralōka pātāla kō'u kahata kina  
 kahām hanumānu-sē bīra bāmķē..45..

Verse no. 6/45—On whose war-cry do Brahma and Shiva become alarmed and stunned, while the sun has to spur the horses of his chariot once again (because they had stopped in their track out of fear)?

Who is he whose blinding splendour and dazzling shine forced warriors like Bhimsen to close their eyes with their hands? [This refers to the Mahabharat war when Hanuman sat atop the war chariot of Arjun, and it is believed that it was Hanuman who led Arjun to his victory in the war. Bhimsen was a very strong warrior of the opposite camp. Here it means that Bhimsen was dazed when he saw Hanuman sitting on the chariot, and he lost all hopes of ever defeating Arjun who was protected by Hanuman. The splendour and shine are metaphors for Hanuman's great fame and majestic glory as an invincible warrior that made his enemies wince and close their eyes out of his fear.]

Wise people sing the valour and glory of Tulsidas' Lord (Hanuman) and say that he has established his majestic fame and stupendous glory over his well-known enemies who were famed for their strength and valour. Can anyone say that there is anyone who can be compared to Hanuman in bravery and strength in the heaven, on the earth and in the subterranean worlds?

जातुधानावली-मत्तकुंजरघटा  
निरखि मृगराजु ज्यो गिरितें दूख्यो ।  
बिकट चटकन चोट, चरन गहि, पटकि महि,  
निघटि गए सुभट, सतु सबको छूख्यो ।।  
'दास तुलसी' परत धरनि धरकत, झुकत  
हाट-सी उठति जंबुकनि लूख्यो ।  
धीर रघुबीरको बीर रनबाँकुरो  
हाँकि हनुमान कुलि कटकु कूख्यो ।। 46 ।।

46. jātudhānāvalī-mattakumjaraghaṭā  
nirakhi mrgarāju jyōm giritēm ṭūṭyō.  
bikaṭa caṭakana cōṭa, carana gahi, paṭaki mahi,  
nighaṭi ga'e subhaṭa, satu sabakō chūṭyō..  
'dāsa tulasī' parata dharani dharakata, jhukata  
hāṭa-sī uṭhati jambukani lūṭyō.  
dhīra raghubīrakō bīra ranabāmkurō  
hāmki hanumāna kuli kaṭaku kūṭyō..46..

Verse no. 6/46—Hanuman pounced on demons like a lion jumps upon a herd of wild elephants from the top of a mountain. All the warriors became hopeless and lost their courage and strength on being smitten by Hanuman's slaps and were dashed to ground by their legs. Tulsidas says that the earth shivered (shook) when the warriors fell on it, and jackals snatched at and ran away dragging falling warriors like robbers loot bulging purses in a market place. Lord Ram's brave and courageous warrior Hanuman repeatedly challenged the army of demons and crushed/beat them to pulp with great agility and ferocity.

### Chappai

कतहुँ बिटप-भूधर उपारि परसेन बरषषत ।

कतहुँ बाजिसों बाजि मर्दि, गजराज करष्षत ।।  
 चरनचोट चटकन चकोट अरि-उर-सिर बज्जत ।  
 बिकट कटकु बिदरत बीरु बारिदु जिमि गज्जत ।।  
 लंगूर लपेटत पटकि भट, 'जयति राम, जय!' उच्चरत ।  
 तुलसीस पवननंदनु अटल जुद्ध क्रुद्ध कौतुक करत ।।47 ।।

47. katahum' biṭapa-bhūdhara upāri parasēna baraśśata.  
 katahum' bājisōm bāji mardī, gajarāja karaśśata..  
 caranacōṭa caṭakana cakōṭa ari-ura-sira bajjata.  
 bikaṭa kaṭaku biddarata bīru bāridu jimi gajjata..  
 laṅgūra lapēṭata paṭaki bhaṭa, 'jayati rāma, jaya!' uccarata.  
 tulasīsa pavananandanu aṭala jud'dha krud'dha kautuka karata..47..

Verse no. 6/47—Somewhere he (Hanuman) uproots trees and mountains, and showers them on the enemies' army; elsewhere, he crushes horses against horses and kills elephants by dragging them on the ground and then dashing them on it. The thud of his slaps and kicks on the chest and heads of the enemy resound and reverberate in the battle-field. That brave warrior (Hanuman) thunders like a cloud while slaying the formidable army of demons. He shouts 'Jai Ram, Jai Ram!' while dashing the demon warriors to the ground by wrapping his tail around their legs. In this way, the Lord of Tulsidas, son of wind God (Hanuman) performs wondrous and marvelous war-deeds in the battle-field.

अंग-अंग दलित ललित फूले किंसुक-से  
 हने भट लाखन लखन जातुधानके ।  
 मारि कै, पछारि कै, उपारि भुजदंड चंड,  
 खंडि-खंडि डारे ते बिदारे हनुमानके ।।  
 कूदत कबंधके कदम्ब बंब-सी करत,  
 धावत दिखावत हैं लाघौ राघौबानके ।  
 तुलसी महेसु, बिधि, लोकपाल, देवगन,  
 देखत बेवान चढ़े कौतुक मसानके ।।48 ।।

48. aṅga-aṅga dalita lalita phūlē kinsuka-sē  
 hanē bhaṭa lākhana lakhana jātudhānakē.  
 māri kai, pachāri kai, upāri bhujadaṇḍa caṇḍa,  
 khaṇḍi-khaṇḍi ḍārē tē bidārē hanumānakē..  
 kūdata kabandhakē kadamba bamba-sī karata,  
 dhāvata dikhāvata hairi lāghau rāghaubānakē.  
 tulasī mahēsu, bidhi, lōkapāla, dēvagana,  
 dēkhata bēvāna caṛhē kautuka masānakē..48..

Verse no. 6/48—Multitudes of Ravana's warriors were wounded by Laxman's attack, and they appeared red like a blossoming Kapas flower (the flower is red, so the demons resembled it because of blood oozing and smearing their bodies, making it appear red) (1); some of the warriors were killed, dashed to the ground, their arms torn away from the trunk, punctured and lacerated and thrown away (2).

Groups of Kabandhs<sup>1</sup> jumped and skipped about shouting "Bung-Bung" in the battle-field, as if showing the rapidity of Lord Ram's arrows (3).

Tulsidas says that Shiva, Brahma, the eight Lokpals (8 guardians of the world) and other Gods rode their chariots and watched the proceeding of the battle field from the sky (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The Kabandh is a special category of hobgoblin who has only trunk but no head or legs. Legend has it that Indra had punched the head and legs of a demon called Danu with his thunderbolt inside its trunk, as a result its body was reduced to only a trunk with a large mouth and protruding long arms.]

लोथिन सों लोहूके प्रबाह चले जहाँ-तहाँ  
मानहुँ गिरिन्ह गेरु झरना झरत हैं ।  
श्रोनितसरित घोर कुंजर-करारे भारे,  
कूलतें समूल बाजि-बिटप परत हैं ॥  
सुभट-सरीर नीर-चारी भारी-भारी तहाँ,  
सूरनि उछाहु, कूर कादर डरत हैं ।  
फेकरि-फेकरि फेरु फारि-फारि पेट खात  
काक-कंक बालक कोलाहलु करत हैं ॥ 49 ॥

49. lōthina sōm lōhūkē prabāha calē jahām̐-tahām̐  
mānahum̐ girinha gēru jharanā jharata haiṁ.  
śrōnitasarita ghōra kunjara-karārē bhārē,  
kūlatēm̐ samūla bāji-biṭapa parata haiṁ..  
subhaṭa-sarīra nīra-cārī bhārī-bhārī tahām̐,  
sūrani uchāhu, kūra kādara ḍarata haiṁ.  
phēkari-phēkari phēru phārī-phārī pēṭa khāta  
kāka-kaṅka bālaka kōlāhalu karata haiṁ..49..

Verse no. 6/49—Streams of blood flowed from the lacerated flesh of the warriors every where in the battle-field as if red water oozes from the crevices in the mountains. A huge river of blood started flowing; the elephants formed the embankments of that river, and dead horses falling in the stream of blood resembled the trees on the banks of a river which are uprooted and tumble in it. The dead bodies of the warriors are like the different aquatic creatures of that river of blood. That scene greatly excites and thrills brave warriors, but cowards and impotent people become scared, turn pale and swivel in horror. Jackals howl and tear apart the entrails to eat, while crows, vultures etc. cheer in mirth like happy children enjoying themselves at play.

ओझरीकी झोरी काँधें, आँतिनिकी सेल्ही बाँधें,  
मूँड़के कमंडल खपर किएँ कोरि कै ।  
जोगिनी झुटुंग झुंड-झुंड बनी तापसी-सी  
तीर-तीर बैठी सो समर-सरि खोरि कै ॥  
श्रोनित सों सानि-सानि गूदा खात सतुआ-से  
प्रेत एक पिअत बहोरि घोरि-घोरि कै ।  
'तुलसी' बैताल-भूत साथ लिए भूतनाथु,  
हेरि-हेरि हँसत हैं हाथ-हाथ जोरि कै ॥ 50 ॥

50. ōjharīkī jhōrī kām̐dhēm̐, ām̐tinikī sēl'hī bām̐dhēm̐,  
mūm̐ṛakē kamaṇḍala khapara ki'ēm̐ kōri kai.

jōginī jhuṭuṅga jhuṇḍa-jhuṇḍa banīm tāpasīm-sī  
 tīra-tīra baiṭhīm sō samara-sari khōri kai..  
 śrōnita sōm sāni-sāni gūdā khāta satu'ā-sē  
 prēta ēka pi'ata bahōri ghōri-ghōri kai.  
 'tulasī' baitāla-bhūta sātha li'ē bhūtanāthu,  
 hēri-hēri haṁsata haiṁ hātha-hātha jōri kai..50..

Verse no. 6/50—With bags made of emptied or hollowed out stomach hung around their shoulders, intestines used as a sling to tie them, and hollowed (scooped) out skulls used as pots (to collect blood), numerous groups of Joginis (spirits who roam battle-fields and drink blood) appear to have taken a ritualistic bath in the river of war, and are currently sitting on the banks of the river-of-blood to rest a while like so many hermitresses. They are kneading fresh flesh with blood and eating it like 'Sattu' (baked gram flour which is kneaded into dough with water and eaten as a meal with salt, spices, chillies etc.), while some spirits and ghosts dilute it with blood and drink it in a semi-fluid form.

Tulsidas says that the Lord of ghosts, phantoms and spirits called 'Bhutnath', accompanied by ghosts and phantoms, is laughing merrily hand-in-hand with his companions. [Such a horrific and blood-curdling scene of the battle-field is indeed remarkable in portrayal.]

राम सरासन तें चले तीर रहे न सरीर, हड़ावरि फूटी ।  
 रावन धीर न पीर गनी, लखि लै कर खप्पर जोगिनी जूटी ।।  
 श्रोनित-छीट छटानि जटे तुलसी प्रभु सोहैं महा छबि छूटी ।  
 मानो मरकत-सैल बिसालमें फैलि चली बर बीरबहूटी ।।51।।

51. rāma sarāsana tēm calē tīra rahē na sarīra, harāvāri phūṭīm.  
 rāvana dhīra na pīra ganī, lakhi lai kara khappara jōginī jūṭīm..  
 śrōnita-chīṭa chaṭāni jaṭē tulasī prabhu sōhaiṁ mahā chabi chūṭīm.  
 mānō marakkata-saila bisālamēm phaili calīm bara bīrabahūṭīm..51..

Verse no. 6/51—The arrows shot from Lord Ram's bow do not stop anywhere; they penetrate the bones of Ravana and escape from the other side of his body. Still, the brave and courageous Ravana pays no heed to the pain (caused by this severe injury). Seeing blood sprouting from his body, the blood-drinking and thirsty Joginis gathered around him with overturned skulls as bowls to collect the blood (1).

Tulsidas says that his Lord Sri Ram, smeared with drops of blood (of the enemy) looked marvelous in the battle-field. He resembled the huge mountain known as Markat on which beautiful deep red creeping insects have spread (2).

### The Fainting of Laxman

मानी मेघनादसों प्रचारि भिरे भारी भट,  
 आपने अपन पुरुषारथ न ढील की ।  
 घायल लखनलालु लखि बिलखाने रामु,  
 भई आस सिथिल जगन्निवास-दीलकी ।।  
 भाईको न मोहु छोहु सीयको न तुलसीस  
 कहैं 'मैं बिभीषनकी कछु न सबील की' ।  
 लाज बाँह बोलेकी, नेवाजेकी सँभार-सार

साहेबु न रामु-से बलाइ लेउँ सीलकी ।।52 ।।

52. mānī mēghanādasōm pracāri bhirē bhārī bhaṭa,  
āpanē apana puruśāratha na ḍhīla kī.  
ghāyala lakhanalālu lakhi bilakhānē rāmu,  
bha'ī āsa sithila jagannivāsa-dīlakī..  
bhā'tkō na mōhu chōhu sīyakō na tulasīsa  
kahaiṁ 'maiṁ bibhīśanakī kachu na sabīla kī'.  
lāja bām̐ha bōlēkī, nēvājēkī sam̐bhāra-sāra  
sāhēbu na rāmu-sē balā'i lē'um̐ sīlakī..52..

Verse no. 6/52—Many brave warriors, who were proud of their bravery, clashed with Meghnad, and they did not refrain from showing their valour, strength and prowess. Seeing Laxman injured, Lord Ram started weeping and wailing in distress, and the heart of him (Ram), who is the abode of the world, lost all hopes. The Lord of Tulsidas does not worry about the loss of his own brother, or Sita, but is terribly upset that he could not make any suitable arrangement for Vibhishan. He is more worried about Vibhishan because he is very sensitive to his responsibilities towards the latter (since he has taken the Lord's refuge). There is no master or Lord compared to Lord Ram—I (Tulsidas) say it earnestly and bow before this unique character, natural disposition and quality of Sri Ram (to look after the welfare of his dependants).

[Note—This incident, i.e. 'the fainting of Laxman and his subsequent revival, has been described also in (i) Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, from Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 54—to Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 62; and (ii) Geetawali, Lanka Kand, verse nos. 5-15.]

कानन बासु दसाननु सो रिपु  
आननश्री ससि जीति लियो है ।  
बालि महा बलसालि दल्यो  
कपि पालि बिभीषनु भूपु कियो है ।।  
तीय हरी, रन बंधु पर्यो  
पै भर्यो सरनागत सोच हियो है ।  
बाँह-पगार उदार कृपाल  
कहाँ रघुबीरु सो बीरु बियो है ।।53 ।।

53. kānana bāsu dasānanu sō ripu  
ānanaśrī sasi jīti liyō hai.  
bāli mahā balasāli dalyō  
kapi pāli bibhīśanu bhūpu kiyō hai..  
tīya harī, rana bandhu paryō  
pai bharyō saranāgata sōca hiyō hai.  
bām̐ha-pagāra udāra krpāla  
kahām̐ raghubīru sō bīru biyō hai..53..

Verse no. 6/53—In spite of hardships of living in a forest and having an enemy as formidable as Ravana, the beauty of the countenance of Sri Ram's face has surpassed (won over) that of the Moon. He slayed most powerful Bali and protected Sugriv (from Bali's torment), and made Vibhishan the king of Lanka. On the other hand, his



wife was stolen (kidnapped) and brother has fallen in the battle-field—still Sri Ram is worried about him who has sought refuge at his feet (about Vibhishan). Indeed, where would one find such a benevolent, magnanimous and merciful Lord as Sri Ram to give protection to those who have sought the protection of his arms?

लीन्हो उखारि पहारु बिसाल,  
चल्यो तेहि काल, बिलंबु न लायो ।  
मारुतनंदन मारुतको, मनको,  
खगराजको बेगु लजायो ।।  
तीखी तुरा 'तुलसी' कहतो,  
पै हिउँ उपमाको समाउ न आयो ।  
मानो प्रतच्छ परब्रतकी नभ  
लीक लसी, कपि यों धुकि धायो ।।54 ।।

54. līnhō ukhāri pahāru bisāla,  
calyō tēhi kāla, bilambu na lāyō.  
mārutanandana mārutakō, manakō,  
khagarājakō bēgu lajāyō..  
tīkhī turā 'tulasī' kahatō,  
pai hi'ēm̐ upamākō samā'u na āyō.  
mānō prataccha parabbatakī nabha  
līka lasī, kapi yōm̐ dhuki dhāyō..54..

Verse no. 6/54—[When the physician named Sushen prescribed the herb called Sanjivani found in the Himalayan Mountains, Hanuman went north to fetch it from Dronachal Mountain, but unable to recognise the herb he uprooted the entire mountain].

Without wasting any time, he (Hanuman) immediately uprooted the huge mountain and started back towards Lanka. He left to shame even wind, Garud (the mount of Lord Vishnu) and mind in speed and swiftness.

Tulsidas says that he tried in vain to find anything to compare with his speed and swiftness of movement as he darted across the sky, so he has abandoned the attempt (to describe it). Hanuman leapt so fast and darted like a streak of lightening across the sky that he left a trail behind him in it (i.e. he moved so fast that the mountain appeared to stretch from point-to-point across the sky).

चल्यो हनुमान, सुनि जातुधान कालनेमि  
पठ्यो, सो मुनि भयो, पायो फलु छलि कै ।  
सहसा उखारो है पहारु बहु जोजनको,  
रखवारे मारे भारे भूरि भट दलि कै ।।  
बेगु, बलु, साहस, सराहत कृपाल रामु,  
भरतकी कुसल, अचलु ल्यायो चलि कै ।  
हाथ हरिनाथके बिकाने रघुनाथ जनु,  
सीलसिंधु तुलसीस भलो मान्यो भलि कै ।।55 ।।

55. calyō hanumāna, suni jātudhāna kālanēmi  
paṭhayō, sō muni bhayō, pāyō phalu chali kai.  
sahasā ukhārō hai pahāru bahu jōjanakō,

rakhavārē mārē bhārē bhūri bhaṭa dali kai..  
 bēgu, balu, sāhasa, sarāhata krpāla rāmu,  
 bharatakī kusala, acalu lyāyō cali kai.  
 hātha harināthakē bikānē raghunātha janu,  
 sīlasindhu tulasīsa bhalō mām'yō bhali kai..55..

Verse no. 6/55—Hearing that Hanuman had gone to fetch the life-restoring herb, Ravana sent a demon called Kalnemi to intervene and stop him. He assumed the form of a hermit and (in an attempt to cheat and trap Hanuman) got killed himself. Hanuman easily lifted a very large mountain, many miles long, killed and destroyed numerous demons and the greatest of warriors.

‘Look, Hanuman has brought back the mountain and the news of welfare of Bharat.’ Saying this, the merciful Lord Ram was lavish in his praise of Hanuman’s valour, fame, courage and swiftness as if the Lord was highly indebted and obliged to him.

The Lord of Tulsidas, i.e. Lord Ram, blessed and obliged Hanuman in all possible ways.”

### The War Ends

बाप दियो काननु, भो आननु सुभाननु सो,  
 बैरी भो दसाननु सो, तीयको हरनु भो ।  
 बालि बलसालि दलि, पालि कपिराजको,  
 बिभीषनु नेवाजि, सेत सागर-तरनु भो ॥  
 घोर रारि हेरि त्रिपुरारि-बिधि हारे हिउँ,  
 घायल लखन बीर बानर बरनु भो ।  
 ऐसे सोकमें तिलोकु कै बिसोक पलही में,  
 सबही को तुलसीको साहेबु सरनु भो ॥56॥

56. bāpa diyō kānanu, bhō ānanu subhānanu sō,  
 bairī bhō dasānanu sō, tiyakō haranu bhō.  
 bālī balasāli dali, pālī kapirājakō,  
 bibhīśanu nēvāji, sēta sāgara-taranu bhō..  
 ghōra rāri hēri tripurāri-bidhi hārē hi'ēm̃,  
 ghāyala lakhana bīra bānara baranu bhō.  
 aisē sōkamēm̃ tilōku kai bisōka palahī mēm̃,  
 sabahī kō tulasīkō sāhēbu saranu bhō..56..

Verse no. 6/56—“Lord Ram’s face never showed anger, remorse, annoyance or dejection and any other negative signs even though his father exiled him, or a warrior as brave as Ravana became his enemy and kidnapped Sita. He protected Sugriv by killing his enemy and arch rival, the powerful Bali, had mercy on Vibhishan, crossed the ocean by constructing a bridge across it, fought such a furious war that even Brahma and Shiva shuddered and had lost all hopes of victory in their hearts, and his brother Laxman was wounded in the battle, got so much smeared with blood and dust that his countenance resembled those of red-faced monkeys.

Even in the face of such adversities and misfortunes, he could redeem the three Lokas (by vanquishing the fear of the Gods)—Tulsidas says that his Lord is such that he gives refuge to all and obliges them fully.”

[Note—Verse nos. 56—58 sort of recapitulates the story of Lord Ram since his coming to the forest till the time the epic war of Lanka ended and the Lord was victorious.]

कुंभकरन्नु हन्यो रन राम, दल्यो दसकंधरु कंधर तोरे।  
पूषनबंस बिभूषन-पूषन-तेज-प्रताप गरे अरि-ओरे॥  
देव निसान बजावत, गावत, साँवतु गो मनभावत भो रे।  
नाचत-बानर-भालु सबै 'तुलसी' कहि 'हा रे! हहा भै अहो रे'॥ 57॥

57. kumbhakarannu han'yō rana rāma, dalyō dasakandharu kandhara tōrē.  
pūśanabansa bibhūśana-pūśana-tēja-pratāpa garē ari-ōrē..  
dēva nisāna bajāvata, gāvata, sām̐vatu gō manabhāvata bhō rē.  
nācata-bānara-bhālu sabai 'tulasī' kahi 'hā rē! hahā bhāi ahō rē'.. 57..

Verse no. 6/57—Lord Ram killed Kumbhkaran and Ravana by breaking the latter's neck in the war. In this way the hail (enemy) melted by the heat of the sun (the glory of Lord Ram) (1).

The Gods sing and beat their trumpets and drums because their dependence on Ravana ended and their wishes were fulfilled. Even the monkeys and bears are dancing with joy, cheering, 'Oh what a wonder! How great! Fantastic!' (2)."

मारे रन रातिचर रावनु सकूल दलि,  
अनुकूल देव-मुनि फूल बरषतु हैं।  
नाग, नर, किंनर, बिरंचि, हरि, हरु हेरि  
पुलक सरीर हिउँ हेतु हरषतु हैं॥  
बाम ओर जानकी कृपानिधानके बिराजै,  
देखत बिषादु मिटै, मोदु करषतु हैं।  
आयसु भो, लोकनि सिधारे लोकपाल सबै,  
'तुलसी' निहाल कै कै दिये सरखतु हैं॥ 58॥

58. mārē rana rāticara rāvanu sakula dali,  
anukūla dēva-muni phūla barāśatu haim̐.  
nāga, nara, kinnara, birañci, hari, haru hēri  
pulaka sarīra hi'ēm̐ hētu harāśatu haim̐..  
bāma ōra jānakī krpānidhānakē birājaim̐,  
dēkhata biśādu miṭai, mōdu karaśatu haim̐.  
āyasu bhō, lōkani sidhārē lōkapāla sabai,  
'tulasī' nihāla kai kai diyē sarakhatu haim̐..58..

Verse no. 6/58—Lord Ram crushed Ravana along with his kin and other demons in the war. Exhilarated and ecstatic at the victory, the Gods and sages showered flowers upon the Lord (from the sky/heaven). Watching the scene, the terrestrial serpents, humans, 'Kinnars' (dancers and singers) as well as Lords Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu became thrilled, and their hearts overflowed with joy, delight, love and affection.

The merciful (Lord Ram) has Sita on his left, the very vision of which results in (provides) freedom from sorrows and enhances happiness. All the Lokpals (guardians) took leave and went to their respective posts (Lokas).

Tulsidas says that the Lord Ram made everyone happy and contented, and declared that now onwards they should all be fearless.”

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## Uttarakāṇḍa

[Note—In Kavitawali, the first six chapters are devoted to narrating the story of Lord Ram from the time of the Lord's birth in Ayodhya till the time of his conquest of Lanka and the elimination of the evil demons. It ought to be noted that all the versions of the story of Lord Ram that are popularly known as 'Ramayana' center around this period in the life of Lord Ram. This is because these were the momentous years in the Lord's life on earth, the years that were most significant and important for it was during this period that the Supreme Being who had to come down to earth as a human being fulfilled his commitment to gods, mother earth, and sages and seers—that he would eliminate the scourge of the evil demons who had been terrorizing the world with their tyranny and cruelty, and were undermining the laws of Dharma (laws of good conduct and orderly living) which was established by the Lord himself to regulate the working of his own creation and to ensure that the wheel of life turned smoothly for everyone.

The seventh chapter is usually the concluding chapter, and is dedicated to narrating the events that happened after Lord Ram returned to Ayodhya and was crowned as a King-Emperor.

Now, Tulsidas has written the story of the Ramayan in his three books—viz. (i) 'Ram Charit Manas' which is his magnum opus and a classic that is unmatched in its narrative of this epic story. In this book the story is not only narrated in fine detail but its uniqueness lies in that great spiritual and metaphysical truths and philosophies have been subtly intertwined in the fabric of the text so carefully and skillfully that while they gel homogenously with the flow of the narrative and form a part of the larger dialogue but when looked at carefully and with analytically they prove to be a repository of fine wisdom and excellent advice for the reader's spiritual well-being and upliftment. Its Uttar Kand describes the reign of Lord Ram as the king of Ayodhya and how the Lord always endeavoured to show the path of Dharma to his subjects, both by his own life as well as by preaching them.

(ii) 'Geetawali' also follows the same pattern but with many differences. It also includes the part of the story which deals with the birth of Lord Ram's two sons, Lava and Kush. The main theme of Geetawali is to 'sing' ('Geet') the glories of the Lord, his charm and exemplary virtues in excellent poetry that is written in different styles of composition that can be sung in various meters of classical music known as 'Raags'. The uniqueness of Geetawali is that a single event or scene has been written using different Raags, meaning that the same thing can be recited or sung in a variety of ways. What Tulsidas missed in Ram Charit Manas was achieved in Geetawali.

(iii) Having done so, Tulsidas decided to change his style in 'Kavitawali' in as much as he wrote the story in a typical style of poetry known as 'Kavitta', which is essentially poetry that follows a set pattern throughout the book like the set pattern of Chaupai and Doha followed in Ram Charit Manas, and opposed to the style of Geetawali where countless Raags are employed to compose the verses. This aside, Tulsidas decided that he would devote the entire seventh chapter called 'Uttarkand' of Kavitawali to eulogizing the divinity and spiritual glory of Lord Ram and the Lord's Holy Name, unlike other versions of the story of Lord Ram where this seventh chapter is usually dedicated to the narration of the events that followed after Lord Ram returned to Ayodhya victorious from his successful campaign at Lanka, his crowning on the throne of Ayodhya as its king-emperor, and world-wide celebrations that followed.

So whereas, as has been noted herein above, the time and life of the Lord after his coronation has been described in the seventh chapter known as 'Uttar Kand' in all other versions of the Ramayana, here in Kavitawali the poet-saint Tulsidas has subtly followed the tradition of the Upanishads and the Purans where usually the last chapter is exclusively dedicated to highlight the glory and divinity of the Holy Entity to whom the main text of the book had been devoted.

Tulsidas wished to emphasise that the story he has just narrated in the earlier chapters of this book 'Kavitawali' (as well as in the other two books) is not the story of some noble and great prince in whose employment Tulsidas served as a court-poet, and is therefore obliged to sing his lord's glories and heap laurels upon him by way of necessity of duty and requirement of employment. It is not so because Lord Ram was not an ordinary human, and Tulsidas was not a paid bard or minstrel of his royal court. The fact is quite the contrary for Lord Ram was an incarnate Supreme Being who had assumed a human form to become a prince of Ayodhya for a variety of reasons, the prominent ones of which have been narrated in Tulsidas' own epic 'Ram Charit Manas' in the words of Lord Shiva, the third of the Trinity Gods and believed to be the most enlightened one in the pantheon of Gods, when he answered the query of his divine consort Parvati who wished to know why and how the 'Lord of the World' was obliged to come down to the earth as a human being. The entire narrative of the Ramayan is in response to Parvati's enquiry. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 108—to Doha no. 192. And, Tulsidas is not praising Lord Ram because he is some great prince who has given the former some sort of huge gift or largesse, but because the Lord is a manifested Supreme Being who is most kind, gracious, benevolent, magnanimous, loving, caring and the only source that can provide the soul with its emancipation and salvation leading to beatitude and felicity.

Though Lord Ram's holiness and divinity as well as the spiritual glory and powers of his Holy Name has been extensively narrated in the other two versions of this magnificent story that Tulsidas wrote, viz. Ram Charit Manas and Geetawali, but he decided that they weren't enough and that he would be doing better if he should follow the tradition of the Purans and the Upanishads, especially the Ram Tapini Upanishad which also has two halves, the previous one is called 'Purva' and the latter half is called 'Uttar', by dedicate an entire chapter to singing the spiritual glory of his divine Lord, Sri Ram, and his Holy Name. So in this chapter the events of the main story have been cited as examples to stress, to underline, the spiritual powers of the Lord's Holy Name and how it gave liberation and deliverance to even the most lowly and humble of creatures, and how having devotion and love and affection for the Lord

would help the creature to overcome all his worldly miseries and torments, and find solace, succour, peace and salvation.

Not only this, quite a number of verses of this Uttarkand are rich in metaphysical and devotional philosophy which have been intricately and inexorably woven in the flow of the text, making then an integral part of the entire spiritual fabric that this chapter presents. Given all-in-all, this chapter is like a stand-alone text that could be separated from the main narrative of the story of the Ramayan to present a highly evolved metaphysical, spiritual and devotional philosophy in the unique style of Tulsidas—simple, straightforward and compelling, something that directly touches the heart and convinces the mind, with evidence from the events of the main story to support his contentions and prove his claims.]

बालि-सो बीरु बिदारि सुकंदु, थप्यो, हरषे सुर बाजने बाजे ।  
पलमें दल्यो दासरथी दसकंधरु, लंक बिभीषनु राज बिराजे ।।  
राम सुभाउ सुने 'तुलसी' हुलसै अलसी हम-से गलगाजे ।।  
कायर कूर कपूतनकी हद, तेउ गरीबनेवाज नेवाजे ।।१।।

1. bāli-sō bīru bidāri sukaṇṭhu, thapyō, haraṣē sura bājanē bājē.  
palamēm dalyō dāsarathīm dasakandharu, laṅka bibhīṣanu rāja birājē..  
rāma subhā'u sunēm 'tulasī' hulasai alasī hama-sē galagājē..  
kāyara kūra kapūtanakī hada, tē'u garībanēvāja nēvājē..1..

Verse no. 7/1—After slaying a brave warrior like Bali, Lord Ram gave Sugriv the kingdom (of Kishkindha). The Gods were extremely happy at this and played musical instruments (to celebrate). The son of Dasrath (Lord Ram) killed the demon Ravana in a short time, and Vibhishan adorned the throne of Lanka (in his place).

Tulsidas says that on hearing the natural temperament, inclinations and benevolent character of Lord Ram, lazy and indolent people like me feel reassured and brag (that they have nothing to worry about any more). Even those who were extremely coward, cruel and unworthy were blessed by Lord Ram and benefited by the Lord's mercy, grace, munificence and benevolence.

बेद पढ़ै बिधि, संभुसभीत पुजावन रावनसों नितु आवैं ।  
दानव देव दयावने दीन दुखी दिन दूरिहि तैं सिरु नावैं ।।  
ऐसेउ भाग भगे दसभाल तैं जो प्रभुता कबि-कोबिद गावैं ।  
रामसे बाम भएँ तेहि बामहि बाम सबै सुख संपति लावैं ।।२।।

2. bēda parḥaim bidhi, sambhusabhīta pujāvana rāvanasōm nitu āvaim.  
dānava dēva dayāvanē dīna dukhī dina dūrihi tēm siru nāvaim..  
aisē'u bhāga bhagē dasabhāla tēm jō prabhutā kabi-kōbida gāvaim..  
rāmasē bāma bha'ēm tēhi bāmahi bāma sabai sukha sampati lāvaim..2..

Verse no. 7/2—Brahma (the creator) used to come personally daily to recite the Vedas in the court of Ravana; Lord Shiva came to accept offerings and prayers daily out of his fear; and all the demons and the Gods bowed their heads to him from a distance with great humility and meekness and as if they were wretched and fit for mercy because they were all terrified of him and did not want to incur his wrath. When Ravana opposed Lord Ram, even luck abandoned and ran away from the same

Ravana whose majesty, strength and powers were so famous and astounding that poets and bards tired of singing his glories and laurels. Happiness, prosperity and welfare become opposed to (i.e. go against or abandon) a person who turns away from Lord Ram.

बेद बिरुद्ध मही, मुनि साधु ससोक किए सुरलोकु उजारो ।  
और कहा कहौं, तीय हरी, तबहूँ करुनाकर कोपु न धारो ॥  
सेवक-छोह तैं छाड़ी छमा, तुलसी लख्यो राम ! सुभाउ तिहारो ।  
तौलौं न दापु दल्यौ दसकंधर, जौलौं बिभीषन लातु न मारो ॥३॥

3. bēda birud'dha mahī, muni sādhu sasōka ki'ē suralōku ujārō.  
aura kahā kahauṁ, tīya harī, tabahūṁ karunākara kōpu na dhārō..  
sēvaka-chōha tēm chārī chamā, tulasī lakhyō rāma! subhā'u tihārō.  
taulauṁ na dāpu dalyau dasakandhara, jaulauṁ bibhīśana lātu na mārō..3..

Verse no. 7/3—Ravana, who behaved in manners proscribed and prohibited by the Vedas (i.e. an unrighteous behaviour), who had made the earth, sages and saints sorrowful, who had overrun and demolished the abode of Gods, and what more can be said, he even stole their women—still, inspite of all his sins, the merciful Lord Ram did not become angry at him. [That is, inspite of such horrors that Ravana created, the Lord made all efforts to avoid the war and give him a chance to amend himself. It was only when Ravana would not listen to any entreaties that he was finally eliminated. And even so the Lord ensured that his soul got emancipation and salvation instead of sending it to hell. This is proved by the fact that when Ravana died a bright effulgence of light emerged from his body and entered the body of Lord Ram—a visible sign of the individual Atma of Ravana entering and becoming one with the Supreme Atma represented by Lord Ram. This is the best destination and rest any soul can ever wish to have. It is a destiny for which great sages and saints yearn for but rarely ever achieve.]

Tulsidas says, 'Oh Sri Ram! I have come to understand your natural habit, temperament and inclinations. You had abandoned your nature of forgiveness for the sake of Vibhishan, because till the moment Ravana had kicked Vibhishan, you had not crushed his ego and pride (or decided to punish him by killing him).'

सोक समुद्र निमज्जत काढ़ि कपीसु कियो, जगु जानत जैसो ।  
नीच निसाचर बैरिको बंधु बिभीषनु कीन्ह पुरंदर कैसो ॥  
नाम लिएँ अपनाइ लियो तुलसी-सो, कहौं जग कौन अनैसो ।  
आरत आरति भंजन रामु, गरीबनेवाज न दूसरो ऐसो ॥४॥

4. sōka samudra nimajjata kāḍhi kapīsu kiyō, jagu jānata jaisō.  
nīca nisācara bairikō bandhu bibhīśanu kīnha purandara kaisō..  
nāma li'ēm apanā'i liyō tulasī-sō, kahauṁ jaga kauna anaisō.  
ārata ārati bhanjana rāmu, garībanēvāja na dūsarō aisō..4..

Verse no. 7/4—The whole world knows how you had saved Sugriv from being drowned in the ocean of sorrows and made him the king of the monkeys. You had made Vibhishan, the wretched demon and brother of your enemy, as famous and renowned as Indra (the king of Gods). Merely on the excuse of chanting your name,



you had accepted (a worthless wretch like) Tulsidas, an evil one like whom is not to be found elsewhere in the world.

Tulsidas observes that Sri Ram is the only one to eliminate the sorrows of the distressed; there is no one like him in having mercy, grace, benediction and munificence towards the poor, the humble, the helpless, the hapless, and the wretched ones.

मीत पुनीत कियो कपि भालुको, पाल्यो ज्यों काहुँ न बाल तनूजो ।  
सज्जन सीव बिभीषनु भो, अजहूँ बिलसै बर बंधुबधू जो ।।  
कोसलपाल बिना 'तुलसी' सरनागतपाल कृपाल न दूजो ।  
कूर, कुजाति, कुपूत, अघी, सबकी सुधरै, जो करै नरु पूजो ।।5।।

5. mīta punīta kiyō kapi bhālukō, pālyō jyōm kāhum̐ na bāla tanūjō.  
sajjana sīva bibhīṣanu bhō, ajahūṁ bilasai bara bandhubadhū jō..  
kōsalapāla binā 'tulasī' saranāgatapāla kṛpāla na dūjō.  
kūra, kujāti, kupūta, aghī, sabakī sudharai, jō karai naru pūjō..5..

Verse no. 7/5—He (Lord Ram) had made friends of even monkeys and bears, and protected them more diligently than one would his infant son. Vibhishan, who being immortal has been unethically enjoying his elder brother's wife (Mandodari) even till now, but he became a bench-mark of saintliness (because he had taken refuge in the holy feet of the Lord).

Tulsidas says that there is no one more merciful and protector of those who surrender (or seek refuge) than (or compared to) the Lord of the Kaushal-clan (Lord Ram). Anyone who adores and worships him can get all welfare and good luck inspite of his being cruel, low-caste, un-worthy and sinful.

तीय सिरोमनि सीय तजी, जेहिं पावककी कलुषाई दही है ।  
धर्मधुरंधर बंधु तज्यो, पुरलोगनिकी बिधि बोलि कही है ।।  
कीस निसाचरकी करनी न सुनी, न बिलोकी, न चित्त रही है ।  
राम सदा सरनागतकी अनखौही, अनैसी सुभायँ सही है ।।6।।

6. tīya sirōmani sīya tajī, jēhim pāvakakī kaluśā'ī dahī hai.  
dharmadhurandhara bandhu tajyō, puralōganikī bidhi bōli kahī hai..  
kīsa nisācarakī karanī na sunī, na bilōkī, na citta rahī hai.  
rāma sadā saranāgatakī anakhaunhī, anaisī subhāyam̐ sahī hai..6..

Verse no. 7/6—Hearing that aspersions were cast on the character of the most pure and exalted Sita, he (Lord Ram) had even abandoned her who was so pure that she had burnt (destroyed, eliminated, overcome) the vicious nature of fire to burn everything put into it. [This refers to the incident when Sita had entered a burning fire at the end of the war at Lanka to prove her innocence. She emerged unscathed. This established on the one hand that she was immaculate, and at the same time it freed the fire from being eternally accused of being fierce, cruel and scorching because till that date anything that entered the fire was reduced to ashes.]

Not only this, the Lord had even abandoned his most obedient and rightful brother Laxman (to protect his vows and uphold the law of duty and propriety), and summoned the citizens and lectured them on Dharma (rule of conduct and righteousness). [This refers to the Lord abandoning Laxman in the final days of his

worldly sojourn when sage Durvasa came visiting and was prevented by Laxman from meeting the Lord. The sage forced him to enter the private chamber of the Lord, inspite of the vow of the Lord that he would kill anyone if he disturbed him while he was meeting Kaal, the god of death, who had come earlier than Durvasa and was in the middle of a meeting with Lord Ram when Laxman came in without permission. To uphold his vow, the Lord was obliged to abandon Laxman as abandoning someone who is most dear is equivalent to killing him.]

But inspite of being so strict in obeying the laws of proper conduct, the same Lord had overlooked the apparent misdeeds of monkeys (e.g. Sugriv) and demons (e.g. Vibhishan) that they enjoyed the wives of their own slain elder brothers (Bali and Ravana respectively). In this way, Lord Ram has naturally tolerated, with a sense of forbearance and forgiveness, all the mischief, the misdemeanours and the misdeeds of those who have taken his protection and refuge (because he is so magnanimous, benevolent, merciful, obliging, kind and forgiving). [That is, the Lord could inflict punishment upon his own self by suffering from separation from his beloved brother Laxman who had served the Lord more than anyone else, not overlooking one single mistake Laxman had made, i.e. entering without permission, but the same Lord had pardoned or overlooked greater mistakes and unrighteous deeds of his devotees such as Sugriv and Vibhishan.]

अपराध अगाध भएँ जनतैं, अपने उर आनत नाहिन जू।  
गनिका, गज, गीध, अजामिलके गनि पातकपुंज सिराहिं न जू॥  
लिऐँ बारक नामु सुधामु दियो, जेहिं धाम महामुनि जाहिं न जू।  
तुलसी ! भजु दीनदयालहि रे ! रघुनाथ अनाथहि दाहिन जू॥७॥

7. aparādha agādha bha'ēm̐ janatēm̐, apanē ura ānata nāhina jū.  
ganikā, gaja, gīdha, ajāmilakē gani pātakapum̐ja sirāhim̐ na jū..  
li'ēm̐ bāraka nāmu sudhāmu diyō, jēhim̐ dhāma mahāmuni jāhim̐ na jū.  
tulasī! bhaju dīnadayālahi rē! raghunātha anāthahi dāhina jū..7..

Verse no. 7/7—You (Lord Ram) do not mind and pay attention to even great misdeeds or mistakes done by your servants (i.e. followers, devotees, subordinates etc.). The sins of Ganika (the prostitute)<sup>1</sup>, Gaja (the elephant)<sup>2</sup>, the Vulture (Jatau)<sup>3</sup> and Ajamil<sup>4</sup> were innumerable, but they obtained that heavenly abode, which is too difficult to attain even by hermits and sages, by uttering your single name.

Tulsidas addresses himself and says, 'Oh Tulsi! Worship and constantly remember the Lord who is the most merciful and a gracious benefactor of the distressed, the destitute, the helpless and the hapless.'

[Note—See Uttar Kand, verse no. 89 also.

<sup>1</sup>Ganika, the prostitute— There was a prostitute by the name of Pingla. One day she had decorated herself with flowers and ornaments and waited eagerly for her lover. When he did not turn up even till midnight, she was very contrite and it dawned upon her that if she had spent so much of her time in devotion and remembrance of the Lord, she would have found deliverance. Right onwards, she turned away from her profession and became an ardent devotee of the Lord. This led to her emancipation and salvation.

<sup>2</sup>Gaja, the elephant— In the ancient country of Dravid (the present day South India), there was a kingdom called Pandyaraaj whose king was named Indradumna. He was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu and used to offer regular worship to the Lord

with great diligence. Once, sage Agastya passed that way with his retinue of disciples. The king was so engrossed in the worship of the Lord that he did not notice the sage and neither did he get up to welcome him or pay his obeisance to him. This annoyed the sage and he cursed—‘You are like a haughty and wild elephant who pays no heed to those standing in the front. Therefore, you deserve to become an elephant—so you would take a birth as an elephant.’ When the king died he became an elephant in a pleasant island in the middle of the Kshirsagar, the celestial ocean of milk.

He had a majestic body and was very strong in his herd. Once he was playing with his she-elephants and companions in a large and beautiful pond. In this pond lived an alligator/crocodile who was actually a Gandharva (a semi-god) named Huhu in his previous life and had become an alligator due to a curse of sage Deval. The alligator /crocodile caught hold of the leg of the elephant and started pulling him inside the deep lake. The Gaja himself and all his companions tried their best but failed to free him from the mouth of the alligator. A long tussle followed and the elephant became completely exhausted. When the situation became so bad that the Gaja, the elephant, was about to sink fully inside the water, he broke a lotus flower and offered it to Lord Vishnu as his last worship and offering before dying. The merciful Lord rushed instantly astride his mount, called the Garud, to save him. Reaching the spot within a moment, the Lord pulled the Gaja out of the water with one hand, and with the other he opened the mouth of the alligator to yank the leg of the elephant free from its clutches. Then the Lord cut off the alligator’s head with his circular weapon known as the Chakra.

Both the alligator/crocodile and the elephant found liberation—the alligator/crocodile reverted to his earlier form of a Gandharva, and Gaja the elephant assumed a divine form similar to that of the Lord and went to his abode in the heaven.

<sup>3</sup>*Jatau*, the vulture— Jatau was a vulture by birth but a great devotee of Lord Ram. When Ravana was rushing towards Lanka on his chariot with Sita as captive, it was Jatau who had fought fiercely with him in an attempt to rescue Sita from the demon’s clutches. But ultimately Ravana had cut off his wings, and so the unfortunate Jatau fell down on the ground, mortally wounded. He kept repeating the holy Name of Lord Ram and managed to hold on to his life till the time the Lord came there in his search of Sita. Jatau told the Lord about Ravana stealing Sita and proceeding towards Lanka in the south direction. Then Jatau left his mortal coil while Lord Ram held him in his arms, caressing him and wiping his wounds with his own hands and using the plaits of his long hairs. When Jatau died, the Lord did his last rites himself—a privilege that no one else except one other character, i.e. Sabari, had got in the whole story of the Ramayana. Even Dasrath, who was the worldly father of the Lord, was denied this honour when he died at Ayodhya after the Lord was sent to exile in the forest because at that time only Bharat and Shatrughan were present in the city, and so his last rites were performed by Bharat. This episode is narrated in all the versions of the Ramayana, e.g. in the Ram Charit Manas of Tulsidas, in its Aranya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 29 right upto Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 33.

It ought to be noted here that prior to this, Lord Ram has met Jatau earlier in the forest and befriended him. Jatau was a friend of Dasrath, and he had assured the Lord that he will stay in close proximity with them (Ram, Sita and Laxman) in the forest to keep a vigilant eye and give them protection to the best of his might—this is narrated in the Adhyatma Ramayan of sage Veda Vyas, Aranya Kand, Canto 4, verse nos. 1-7.

This fact is also endorsed by Tulsidas in Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 12, stanza no. 2.

The glorious way that Jatau died has been lauded and applauded by Tulsidas in Dohawali verse nos. 222-227. Refer also to Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse nos. 12-16.

“Lord Ram lifted Jatau onto his lap and washed his wounds with the tears streaming from his (Ram’s) eyes”—this is said in Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 13, stanza no. 1, while Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 30 says that “the Lord moved his loving hand carrassingly on his head”.

Jatau’s special death which made him a subject of jealousy and envy for all other exalted persons as narrated in the Doha above has one unique aspect—in spite of him being a vulture by birth and body, he was given an honour befitting a father by none else than the Supreme Being (Lord Ram) himself when the Lord performed his last rites himself—refer: (i) Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 16, stanza no. 4; verse no. 14, stanza no. 1; (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 32; (iii) Kavitali, Uttar Kand, verse no. 16, line no. 3; (iv) Doha no. 227 of Dohawali; (v) Vinai Patrika, verse no. 164, stanza no. 2; verse no. 138, stanza no. 3, line no. 1.

Vinai Patrika, verse no. 138, stanza no. 3, line no. 1 says that Lord Ram offered a ‘Pinda’, a ball of cereals that is offered to the soul of one’s departed parent, to Jatau after the bird left its physical body.

Doha no. 227 of Dohawali clearly says “Lord Sri Ram, who is an ocean of graciousness and mercy, performed the last rites of Jatau with a devotion and fervour which was ten times more than what he had for his own father Dasrath, and having done so, he, along with his brother Laxman, gravely mourned his (Jatau’s) death.”

The remarkable thing is that Lord Ram has called Jatau ‘his father’ in clear terms in Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 15, stanza no. 1 when the Lord requests Jatau to live a little longer for some more days so that he (Ram) can enjoy his company as a father and becomes privileged to receive his blessings as a son gets from his father.

Dohawali’s Doha no. 233 says—“Upon hearing the news of how Jatau, the king of vultures, had died, the great ascetics, the Karmayogis (those who do their duties in a righteous manner), the devotees, the wise-men, the sages, the mystics, the hermits, the higher and lower borns, et al—in short, all living beings became jealous of him on the one hand, and praised him and applauded him for the auspicious death he got.”

When people came to know how Jatau had died while being caressed by Lord Ram as he lay cradled in the Lord’s arms, and how the Lord had himself performed his last rites, they all praised Jatau and wished that they too could die the same way. They all became convinced that of all the living beings on earth, no one was as fortunate and lucky as Jatau—because all those who have taken a birth must die, but it’s rarer than the rarest occasion when the Supreme Being himself comes down walking upto a dying man to move his divine hands on his head, to cradle the dying man in his arms, and to do his last rites with his own hands. Their becoming ‘jealous’ is a figure of speech to emphasise how much they envied Jatau because envy is a sort of praise and honour. One becomes envious of another person only when the latter has something that is highly praiseworthy and valuable, and which the other person who is jealous does not have nor expects to have any time in the future.

Jealousy and envy is an indirect way of immense praise. One is not jealous of an evil character in a person, because such character is denounced by the society. One is jealous and envious of a person only if he possesses some noble virtue or skill or asset for which the world lauds him and applauds him.

Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 13, stanza no. 4 explicitly says that when Lord Ram asked Jatau that if he wished to live then the Lord can grant him a longer life, Jatau had replied—“Lord, well, tell me one thing—to be in the presence of the Supreme Lord at the time of death is most difficult even for great ascetics and sages to achieve, and this magnificent opportunity has come to me out of its own free will. Where will I get it again? I will not be cheated of this golden chance by bargaining it for a life that is nonetheless transient, mortal, false, deluding and decayable. Therefore, I do not wish to live any longer!”

Then again, in Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 15, stanza no. 4, Jatau says—“Oh Lord, believe me. My death is so honourable and desirable that not even the four commendable noble fruits that the scriptures say one gets by living a life of full auspiciousness and righteousness (i.e. the rewards of Artha—worldly prosperity and well-being, Dharma—honour that comes with being rightful and righteous), Kaam—fulfilment of all desires, and Moksha—spiritual liberation and deliverance) can ever compare with it. Tell me, is there any such other honourable and divine reward more desirable than the way I am dying?” Lord Ram was left speechless, for he had no answer to this question!

What other factor, besides the fact that Jatau died in the arms of the Supreme Being, made his death so desirable and laudable? He had died in a selfless manner serving the Lord in trying to protect Sita, Lord Ram’s honourable wife, from the clutches of the demon Ravana who had abducted her and was taking her away to his city of Lanka. ‘Selfless service’ is one of the greatest deeds for a person to do, and this single action of Jatau made him perfectly eligible for immediate deliverance upon death. In other words, if one dies doing selfless service, and offers his services to the Lord God while actually undertaking the exercise, then his emancipation and salvation is a surety. Such a creature is praised by all the saints and sages—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 84.

In Ram Charit Manas, Kishkindha Kand, Chaupai line nos. 7-8 that precede Doha no. 27, Angad praised Jatau when he said—“There is no one more praiseworthy and honourable than Jatau in this world. He is most adorable because he had left his mortal body in the selfless service of Lord Ram, and had gone to the divine abode of Lord Hari (Vishnu) after death.”

Nothing is in-accessible or un-attainable for a creature who has the good of others in his heart, who thinks for the welfare of others, and who is not selfish—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 31.

Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 16, stanza no. 3 says that “the king of vultures assumed a divine form and went to heaven after bowing at the holy feet of Lord Ram and enshrining the Lord’s beautiful and holy image in his heart even as he heard his own glories and those of the Lord’s being sung all around in the world”.

Doha no. 224 of Dohawali says “So many have died till now; so many are dying at present; and so many will die in the future with the passage of time—but till today, and not ever in the future, will anyone get the privilege of dying the way Jatau had died. (224)”

<sup>4</sup>*Ajamil*—He is also known as ‘Dwij Bandhu’ because he was a Brahmin by birth. But unfortunately he became enamoured with a prostitute and married her. Bad company made him turn into a hunter. One day a group of sages passed by the village. When they asked the villagers if there was a Brahmin’s house where they could spend the night, the villagers told them of Ajamil. So these sages decided to spend the night there. When Ajamil returned from his hunting trip with a catch of a bird and saw the sages, he felt very ashamed. He confided with them that he is a

fallen man and that they should not eat in his house. The saints had a merciful heart and they thought amongst themselves that it is their moral obligation to show this man some way by which he can find liberation and deliverance.

They cooked their own meals with whatever they had. The next day, they summoned Ajamil and told him, 'Look, your wife is pregnant. She will soon deliver a son. Give that son the name 'Narayan' (one of the many names of Lord Vishnu). This would lead to your emancipation.' And then the group of sages went on their journey. When the son was born, Ajaamil named him as advised by them—he called the son 'Narayan'. He was very fond of the son, and called out his name 'Narayan, Narayan' umpteen numbers of times during the course of the day. He was unwittingly taking the name of Lord Vishnu. This continued till the time came for his death. When he was tormented by the messengers of Yam, the God of hell and death, he became terrified and called out in fear—'Narayan, Narayan. Save me'. Though he was calling his son, but the Lord heard his name being called out by someone in distress. So he sent his own messengers to protect the caller. The messengers of Lord chased away the messengers of Yam and took Ajaamil to heaven. When Yam complained to Vishnu, the Lord told him that if anyone calls out his name at the time of death he is duty-bound to liberate and protect him. This story tells us the power of the name of the Lord.

This story is narrated in Srimad Bhagwat, 6/1-2.]

प्रभु सत्य करी प्रह्लादगिरा, प्रगटे नरकेहरि खंभ महँ।  
झषराज ग्रस्यो गजराजु, कृपा ततकाल बिलंबु कियो न तहाँ॥  
सुर साखि दै राखी है पांडुबधू पट लूटत, कोटिक भूप जहाँ।  
तुलसी ! भजु सोच-बिमोचनको, जनको पनु राम न राख्यो कहाँ॥८॥

8. prabhu satya karī prahalādagirā, pragaṭē narakēhari khambha mahām̃.  
jhaśarāja grasyō gajarāju, kṛpā tatakāla bilambu kiyō na tahām̃.  
sura sākhi dai rākhī hai pāṇḍubadhū paṭa lūṭata, kōṭika bhūpa jahām̃.  
tulasī! bhaju sōca-bimōcanakō, janakō panu rāma na rākhyō kahām̃..8..

Verse no. 7/8—The Lord proved Prahalad correct when he manifested himself from the pillar (of the palace of his father, the demon Hiranaykashipu) in the form of Lord Narshingh (the Man-Lion incarnation of Lord Vishnu)<sup>1</sup>. He showed his mercy instantly when the alligator had caught the foot of the elephant Gaja to pull him into the water to kill him. He protected Draupadi<sup>2</sup> from being disrobed in front of thousands of kings (and preserved her dignity), and made Gods witnesses to the event.

Tulsidas addresses himself saying, 'Oh Tulsidas, you must worship Lord Ram who can bail you out of your misfortunes and sorrows. Say, where has the Lord not honoured the promises and vows made by his devotees; where has the Lord not upheld the truthfulness of the words uttered by his devotees; where has the Lord not protected the self-respect and the dignity of his followers?'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The story of *Prahalad* is narrated in detail in (i) Vishnu Puran, 1/17, and (ii) Bhagvata Puran, 7/4-8.

He was an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu. He was the eldest son of the king of demons, named Hiranyakashipu. His mother was Kayaadhu, the daughter of the demon king named Jambhaasur. Both the mother and the son were initiated by sage Narad who had inspired them to become devotees of Lord Vishnu.

The father, being a demon, was an inveterate opponent of Lord Vishnu, and so naturally he couldn't tolerate his own son worshipping his enemy Lord Vishnu. He

tried his best to dissuade Prahalad from being devoted to the Lord, but the son had immense faith in the Lord and would not be deterred by his father's threats and scolding. Hiranyakashipu tried even cruel means to change Prahalad, including an attempt to burn in a raging fire, but the child devotee escaped unscathed. So, finally the demon father decided to kill him personally. Prahalad was tied to a pillar and asked 'Where is your Lord Vishnu? Is he in this pillar also?' The child replied in the affirmative. Then his father swung the sword to kill him, and it was at this instant that Lord Vishnu revealed himself as the famous incarnation known as 'Nrisingh'—the upper half of his body was like a lion and the lower half was like a man. An Upanishad titled 'Nrisingh Tapini Upanishad' of the Atharva Veda is dedicated to this Lord.

Lord Nrisingh snatched the sword and laid the demon father across his laps. He then tore through his abdomen, and yanked out his intestines, thereby killing the demon. He then picked up the child Prahalad on to his laps and lovingly licked and caressed him like a lion does to its cub. But Prahalad prayed to the Lord to provide deliverance to the soul of his father, at which the Lord liberated the demon from all his sins.

Prahalad is credited with enumerating the nine-fold path of Bhakti, the path of devotion for the Lord, in the epic Bhaagvata, 7/5/23.

Lord Dattatreya, one of the manifestations of Lord Vishnu, had preached Prahalad about the eclectic state of Avadhut Sanyasi in the form of a huge python, known as Ajgara. Prahalad had spiritual discussions also with other sages such as Hansa (the divine Swan, an incarnation of Vishnu), and with Indra (the king of Gods).

Prahalad had four brothers, three sons and a daughter. The king of demons known as Bali, who was famous for his charities and donations, was a grandson of Prahalad. The incarnations of Vishnu as Vaaman, the dwarf mendicant, is related to this legendary king.

<sup>2</sup>*Draupadi*—The insult of Draupadi in full court was one of the main reasons why the devastating clan war of Mahabharat was fought between the Pandavas and the Kurus in the battle-field of Kurushetra. The Pandavas were five brothers, and the Kurus were a hundred. The Kurus had cheated the Pandavas in a game of dice, and after having lost everything as a wager, the unfortunate Pandavas betted their wife Draupadi, and they lost her too. Once in the open court, the Kuru king Duryodhan asked his brother Dusshaashan to disrobe her. When her Sari (a body wrapping garment worn by women in India) was being pulled out so that she could be made naked, Draupadi appealed to Lord Krishna to protect her. The Lord assumed the form of cloth. The sinful king pulled and pulled, and a huge mound of cloth gathered, but the Sari never seemed to end. In this way the dignity and self-respect of Draupadi was preserved by the Lord.]

नरनारि उघारि सभा महुँ होत दियो पटु, सोचु हर्यो मनको ।  
 प्रह्लाद बिषाद-निवारन, बारन-तारन, मीत अकारनको ।।  
 जो कहावत दीनदयाल सही, जेहि भारु सदा अपने पनको ।।  
 'तुलसी' तजि आन भरोस भर्जे, भगवानु भलो करिहैं जनको ।।९।।

9. naranāri ughāri sabhā mahum̐ hōta diyō paṭu, sōcu haryō manakō.  
 prahalāda biśāda-nivārana, bārana-tārana, mīta akāranakō..  
 jō kahāvata dīnadayāla sahī, jēhi bhāru sadā apanē panakō..  
 'tulasī' taji āna bharōsa bhajēm̐, bhagavānu bhalō karihair̐ janakō..9..

Verse no. 7/9—When Arjun's wife Draupadi was being disrobed in the full court of Kaurav king Duryodhan, he (Lord Krishna) gave her clothes (Sari) and removed the agony of her mind. He who eliminated the sorrows of Prahalad and protected Gaja

(the elephant) is also a selfless friend and called a true benefactor of the distressed as he always remembers his duties, words, responsibilities etc. towards them who have reposed their faith and trust in him.

Tulsidas says that if one relies solely on such a Lord, it is certain that the Lord will protect him fully.

रिषिनारि उधारि, कियो सठ केवटु मीतु पुनीत, सुकीर्ति लही ।  
निजलोकु दियो सबरी-खगको, कपि थाप्यो, सो मालुम है सबही ॥  
दससीस-बिरोध सभित बिभीषनु भूपु कियो, जग लीक रही ।  
करुनानिधिको भजु, रे तुलसी! रघुनाथ अनाथके नाथु सही ॥१०॥

10. riśināri udhāri, kiyō saṭha kēvaṭu mītu punīta, sukīrti lahī.  
nijaḷōku diyō sabarī-khagakō, kapi thāpyō, sō māluma hai sabahī..  
dasasīsa-birōdha sabhīta bibhīśanu bhūpu kiyō, jaga līka rahī.  
karunānidhikō bhaju, rē tulasī! raghunātha anāthakē nāthu sahī..10..

Verse no. 7/10—Lord Ram had provided liberation to sage Gautam's wife (Ahilya)<sup>1</sup> and made Kewat (the boatman)<sup>2</sup> pure by accepting him as a friend—thereby establishing his good name. He gave Sabari<sup>3</sup> (the backward, tribal woman) and the vulture Jatayu his abode (in heaven), and established Sugriva on the throne (of Kishkindha) which is well known to all. He made Vibhishan<sup>4</sup>, who was scared of Ravana, as a king (of Lanka) as a result of which he became renowned in the world.

Tulsidas says to himself— 'Oh Tulsidas! Worship Lord Ram who is a treasury of mercy and compassion, and is a benevolent Lord who is a true well-wisher of the destitute, the distressed, the helpless and the hapless.'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>*Ahilya*—The story of Ahilya is narrated in brief in a note appended to Ayodhya Kand, verse no. 6.

<sup>2</sup>The *Boatman*—This story is narrated in Kavitawali's Ayodhya Kand, verse nos. 5-10.

<sup>3</sup>*Sabari*— According to the story of Ramayana, Shabari was a woman belonging to a forest tribe called 'Shabari'. This tribe was classified as Shudras or lower caste, and sustained themselves by collecting and selling honey and fruits from the forest trees. Being of a low caste, she is said have been ostracized by others. She served a sage named Matanga very devotedly. The sage was a realised soul, and so pleased was he with her devotion and service that he blessed her at the time of leaving his body that she would find her emancipation and salvation when Lord Ram visits her while searching for Sita. Like her Guru, Shabari too left her mortal body after having the privilege of meeting and worshipping the Lord in person by lighting the pyre herself with her mystical powers. According to Adhyatma Ramayana of sage Veda Vyas, it was Lord Ram who had performed her last rites himself, a rare privilege that was even denied to his own worldly father Dasrath.

Shabari used to live in the hermitage where earlier sage Matanga lived. This hermitage was near Mount Rishyamook where Sugriva, the exiled younger brother of the king of monkeys Vali, lived with his close confidantes Hanuman, Jamvant, Naal and Neel etc. This place was about ten Yojans or eighty miles from Kishkindha, the capital of the forest kingdom of which Vali was the king.

There is a story about Lake Pampa on the banks of which she lived. The great sage Matang had his hermitage here. Shabari used to get up very early and clean the path around this lake before her Guru went there for his daily bath and other chores. It so happened that one day, the sages and seers who lived in that area saw her cleaning



the path leading to the lake very early in the morning. Since she was of a low caste, they cursed and scolded her because they regarded her appearance as defiling the place. This misplaced notion of superiority and high stature immensely displeased the Lord. So as soon as those haughty and proud sages went and took a dip in that lake, its water turned turbid, polluted and infested by worms and filth. When Sri Ram had gone there during his forest exile, the sages and seers requested him to purify that lake. Sri Ram, being all-knowing, knew the secret behind that pollution, and in order to teach those sages a lesson of their lives, he asked them to request Sabari to take a dip in it. As soon as she did it, the water regained its former pristine purity, and the lake its former exceptional scenic beauty. This made the haughty sages and seers feel ashamed at their ignorance and behaviour.

According to the story of Ramayana, Sri Ram had visited her hermitage and enjoyed the fruits offered by her just like he would have enjoyed them if they were given to him by his mother. In the 'Ram-Sarawali of Surdas', verse no. 11, it is said that 'Sabari was a long time ardent devotee and a humble follower of Raghupati (Sri Ram). He accepted and ate fruits offered by her, preached her on the concept of complete devotion, and then liberated her by giving her residence in his own abode.' It was Shabari who had advised Sri Ram to go towards the Rishyamook mountain and make friends with Sugriv, the monkey king, who in turn would help the Lord in finding out Sita and freeing her from the clutches of her captors.

The entire episode of Sabari appears in Ram Charit Manas in Aranya Kand, Chaupai line no. 5 that precede Doha no. 34, to Doha no. 36. In these verses of Ram Charit Manas, the episode of Sabari is described in detail.

<sup>3</sup>*Vibhishan*— He was the younger brother of Ravana of Lanka, and was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu. His life-sketch is described in (i) Valmiki Ramayan, Uttara Kand, Sarga (Canto) nos. 9-10; (ii) Adhyatma Ramayan by Veda Vyas, Uttara Kand, Canto nos. 1-2; Anand Ramayan, Saar Kand (Chapter 1), Sarga (Canto) 13, verse nos. 1-24; 47-53.

The wife of Vibhishan was named Sarmaa, and she was the daughter of Sailush. Refer: Anand Ramayan (of Valmiki), Saar Kand, Sarga 13, verse no. 66.

Though born in a demon race, Vibhishan was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu, and therefore of Lord Ram as the latter was an incarnation of Vishnu. [Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Doha no. 177; Sundar Kand, Chaupai Line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 6—to Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 8.]

When Hanuman had visited Lanka in the search of Sita, he had met Vibhishan first who had directed Hanuman to the place where Sita was seated in the Ashok grove. [Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 3-5 that precede Doha no. 8.]

Later on when Vibhishan tried to convince his brother Ravana to give Sita back to Ram and avoid the fierce war that would be ruinous for the clan, he was kicked by Ravana. So, humiliated and insulted, Vibhishan left Lanka and took refuge with Lord Ram. He was welcomed with open arms by the Lord and accepted warmly. [Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai Line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 40 to Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 50.]

Vibhishan played a major role in the war of Lanka, as an advisor of Lord Ram as he knew the intricate detail of the city's security setup and strategy of the demon army, had fought alongside Lord Ram and his brother Laxman in the major battles of the war, warned the Lord when Ravana started a fire-sacrifice that would have made him un-defeatable if completed, leading to the monkey army disrupting it. [Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, (i) Chaupai Line nos. 1-8 that precede Doha no. 13; (ii) Chaupai Line nos. 1-6 that precede Doha no. 39; (iii) Chaupai Line nos. 1-2 that

precede Doha no. 45; (iv) Chaupai Line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 64—to Chaupai Line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 65; (v) Chaupai Line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 73; (vi) Chaupai Line nos. 1-10 that precede Doha no. 75; (vii) Chaupai Line nos. 1-3 that precede Doha no. 85; (viii) Doha no. 93 and Chaupai Line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 95.]

As stated herein above, it was Vibhishan who had finally helped Lord Ram to kill Ravana by telling him the secret of the latter's immortality in the final stages of the war—the nectar that he held in his navel. Then Lord Ram had shot an arrow that sucked out this nectar which resulted in the death of Ravana. [Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 102 to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 103.]

After the death of Ravana and end of the war, he was rewarded by being crowned the king of Lanka. [Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-6 that precede Doha no. 106.]

कौसिक, बिप्रबधू मिथिलाधिपके सब सोच दले पल माहैं ।  
बालि-दसानन-बंधु-कथा सुनि, सत्रु सुसाहेब-सीलु सराहैं ॥  
ऐसी अनूप कहैं तुलसी रघुनायककी अगनी गुनगाहैं ।  
आरत, दीन, अनाथनको रघुनाथु करैं निज हाथकी छाहैं ॥११॥

11. *kausika, biprabadhū mithilādhīpakē saba sōca dalē pala māhairmai.*  
*bāli-dasānana-bandhu-kathā suni, satru susāhēba-sīlu sarāhairm..*  
*aisī anūpa kahairm tulasī raghunāyakakī aganī gunagāhairm.*  
*ārata, dīna, anāthanakō raghunāthu karairm nija hāthakī chāhairm..11..*

Verse no. 7/11—Lord Ram had instantly removed the worries of Kausik (sage Vishwamitra), the sage's wife (Ahilya), and king of Mithila (Janak). Hearing the story (and fate) of the brothers of Bali and Ravana (Sugriv and Vibhishan respectively), even enemies shower praises on the character and (benevolent, merciful, forgiving) natural temperament of our Lord Sri Ram.

Tulsidas sings numerous such glories and famous tales of Lord Ram. He brings under the shadow of his out-stretched palms (like a protective umbrella) all those who are restless, distressed, wretched and destitute.

तेरे बेसाहें बेसाहत औरनि, और बेसाहिकैं बेचनिहारे ।  
ब्योम, रसातल, भूमि भरे नृप कूर, कुसाहेब सेंटिहुँ खारे ॥  
'तुलसी' तेहि सेवत कौन मरै! रजतें लघुको करै मेरुतें भारे ।  
स्वामि सुसील समर्थ सुजान, सो तो-सो तुहीं दसरत्थ दुलारे ॥१२॥

12. *tērē bēsāhēm bēsāhata aurani, aura bēsāhikai bēcanihārē.*  
*byōma, rasātala, bhūmi bharē nrpa kūra, kusāhēba sēntihum' khārē..*  
*'tulasī' tēhi sēvata kauna marai! rajatēm laghukō karai mērutēm bhārē.*  
*svāmi susīla samartha sujāna, sō tō-sō tuhīm dasarat'tha dulārē..12..*

Verse no. 7/12—'Once Lord Ram accepts someone, the latter is accepted by all others (i.e. all follow him like obedient followers). The acceptance by the Lord is an all-time affair—i.e. once the Lord accepts someone, he never abandons him. He is not like other Gods who are selfish in the sense that when their interest is fulfilled they would not demur or think twice before abandoning the person. In the whole world—in the

heavens, on the earth and in the subterranean world—there are numerous cruel kings and wicked lords, but even if they are available free of cost they are not worthy to be accepted as lords by anyone. Tulsidas says that it is futile and worthless to serve them.

Who can make the 'humblest-than-dust' servant greater than the huge mountain known as Mt. Sumeru except you oh Lord who is the courteous and graceful son of Dasrath (i.e. Lord Ram)? As a kind, compassionate, able and worthy Lord, you have no parallel; there is no one like you in the entire creation.'

जातुधान, भालु, कपि, केवट, बिहंग जो-जो  
पाल्यो नाथ ! सद्य सो-सो भयो काम-काजको ।  
आरत अनाथ दीन मलिन सरन आए,  
राखे अपनाइ, सो सुभाउ महाराजको ।।  
नामु तुलसी, पै भोंडो भाँग तैं, कहायो दासु,  
कियो अंगीकार ऐसे बड़े दगाबाजको ।  
साहेबु समर्थ दसरथके दयालदेव !  
दूसरो न तो-सो तुहीं आपनेकी लाजको ।।१३ ।।

13. jātudhāna, bhālu, kapi, kēvaṭa, bihaṅga jō-jō  
pālyō nātha! sadya sō-sō bhayō kāma-kājakō.  
ārata anātha dīna malina sarana ā'ē,  
rākhē apanā'i, sō subhā'u mahārājakō..  
nāmu tulasī, pai bhōṇḍō bhāmṅa tēm, kahāyō dāsu,  
kiyō aṅgikāra aisē baṛē dagābājakō.  
sāhēbu samartha dasarat'thakē dayāladēva!  
dūsarō na tō-sō tuhīm āpanēkī lājakō..13..

Verse no. 7/13—'Oh Lord! All those whom you accepted—such as the demons, bears, monkeys, boatman, birds (Jatau)—immediately became worthy from being worthless. Distressed, destitute, wretched, poor, evil-ones—all who sought your refuge were accepted by you. This is the benevolent nature and merciful character of the Lord (Sri Ram) that he accepts even the most unworthy and distressed, and immediately transforms them into someone who is exceptionally worthy and fortunate.

Tulsidas says—'Although my name is 'Tulsi' (a holy plant), but I am worse (more sinful) than 'Bhaang' (a hallucination producing herb called cannabis sativa). Once you accepted me as one of your own servants (followers or devotees), I was started being called by the name that has 'Das' as a suffix. [I am being called 'Tulsi+das = Tulsidas, literally meaning a servant or follower of a religious cult, system or Guru whose exalted name is Tulsi. 'Tulsi' is also very favourite of Lord Vishnu like the goddess Laxmi. Hence, I was blessed by Tulsi so much so that I became deemed to be her obedient servant, which in itself is a great fortune.]

You are so great that you have accepted a deceitful and cunning fellow like me! Oh Sri Ram! There is no able or kind master, or a merciful Lord like you; you are the only Lord who protects the dignity of those who have taken refuge with him. [In other words, other lords and masters tend to look down upon those humble and unfortunate people who have been forced to seek refuge with them due to their misfortunes, and these lords and masters tend to exploit their weakness and compulsions to serve their own vested interest, but you are so magnanimous and graceful that you give full respect and honour to such people and protect their dignity.]'

महाबली बालि दलि, कायर सुकंठु कपि  
 सखा किए महाराज! हो न काहू कामको ।  
 भ्रात-घात-पातकी निसाचर सरन आएँ,  
 कियो अंगीकार नाथ एते बड़े बामको ।।  
 राय, दसरथके! समर्थ तेरे नाम लिएँ,  
 तुलसी-से कूरको कहत जगु रामको ।  
 आपने निवाजेकी तौ लाज महाराजको  
 सुभाउ, समुझत मनु मुदित गुलामको ।।14।।

14. mahābalī bāli dali, kāyara sukaṇṭhu kapi  
 sakhā ki'ē mahārāja! hō na kāhū kāmako.  
 bhrāta-ghāta-pātakī nisācara sarana ā'ēm,  
 kiyō aṅgikāra nātha ētē barē bāmako..  
 rāya, dasarat'thakē! samartha tērē nāma li'ēm,  
 tulasī-sē kūrakō kahata jagu rāmako.  
 āpanē nivājēkī tau lāja mahārājakō  
 subhā'u, samujhata manu mudita gulāmakō..14..

Verse no. 7/14— 'Oh Lord! You had killed the very strong and valiant Bali and made the coward Sugriv, who was a stupid and worthless fellow, your friend. You had accepted the demon (Vibhishan) who had committed a grave sin of betraying his own elder brother (Ravana)—in spite of it being against the laws of Dharma (probity and righteous conduct)—when he came to seek your protection and refuge. Oh king Dasrath's able and worthy son, Sri Ram! Considering your natural tendency and benevolent temperament to protect the dignity of those servants/subordinates who have sought your refuge, the mind and heart of your servant (i.e. Tulsidas) feels extremely exuberant, happy, ecstatic, exhilarant and delightful that he has chosen you as his Lord.'

रूप-सीलसिंधु, गुनसिंधु, बंधु दीनको,  
 दयानिधान, जानमनि, बीरबाहु-बोलको ।  
 साद्ध कियो गीधको, सराहे फल सबरीके  
 सिला-साप-समन, निबाहो नेहु कोलको ।।  
 तुलसी-उराउ होत रामको सुभाउ सुनि,  
 को न बलि जाइ, न बिकाइ बिनु मोलको ।  
 ऐसेहु सुसाहेबसों जाको अनुरागु न, सो  
 बड़ोई अभागो, भागु भागो लोभ-लोलको ।।15।।

15. rūpa-sīlasindhu, gunasindhu, bandhu dīnakō,  
 dayānidhāna, jānamani, bīrabāhu-bōlakō.  
 srād'dha kiyō gīdhakō, sarāhē phala sabarikē  
 silā-sāpa-samana, nibāhyō nēhu kōlakō..  
 tulasī-urā'u hōta rāmako subhā'u suni,  
 kō na bali jā'i, na bikā'i binu mōlakō.  
 aisēhu susāhēbasōm jākō anurāgu na, sō  
 barō'i abhāgō, bhāgu bhāgō lōbha-lōlakō..15..

Verse no. 7/15—Lord Ram is an ocean of beauty, good and noble character, sea of virtues, friend of the distressed, treasury of mercy, the best and most exalted amongst the wise, fearless in expressing himself, and peerless in the strength of his arms. He performed the last rites of a vulture (Jatau), praised the fruits offered to him by Sabari, vanquished the curse of Ahilya (who was turned into a stone), and showed affection towards Bhils (tribals or forest inhabitants).

Tulsidas says that one feels greatly encouraged and reassured on hearing the nature and temperament of Lord Ram. Who would not sacrifice (surrender) himself and feel sold-out at the hands of the Lord with such a great, noble and benevolent character! Those who have no attachment with and affection for such a Lord are indeed very unlucky, and (it appears that) luck has run away from (i.e. forsaken or abandoned) such a man who is swayed by selfish interests and greed.

सूरसिरताज, महाराजनि के महाराज,  
जाको नामु लेतही सुखेतु होत ऊसरो ।  
साहेबु कहाँ जहान जानकीसु सो सुजानु,  
सुमिरैं कृपालुके मरालु होत खूसरो ।।  
केवट, पषान, जातुधान, कपि-भालु तारे,  
अपनायो तुलसी-सो धींग धमधूसरो ।  
बोलको अटल, बाँहको पगारु, दीनबंधु,  
दूबरको दानी, को दयानिधान दूसरो ।।16 ।।

16. sūrasiratāja, mahārājani kē mahārāja,  
jākō nāmu lētahīm sukhētu hōta ūsarō.  
sāhēbu kahām̐ jahāna jānakīsu sō sujānu,  
sumirēm̐ kṛpālukē marālu hōta khūsarō..  
kēvaṭa, paśāna, jātudhāna, kapi-bhālu tārē,  
apanāyō tulasī-sō dhīnga dhamadhūsarō.  
bōlakō aṭala, bām̐hakō pagāru, dīnabandhu,  
dūbarēkō dānī, kō dayānidhāna dūsarō..16..

Verse no. 7/16—Who is a better Lord and Master in this world than Lord Ram who is the best amongst the brave and an Emperor of kings, by taking (i.e. remembering or invoking) whose name even the barren moor becomes a habitable and fertile land, and by remembering whom even an owl (i.e. an idiot) becomes a swan (a wise-one)? He (Lord Ram) gave salvation to Kewat, a stone (Ahilya), demons, monkeys and bears, and even accepted the wicked idiot like Tulsidas. Who is more trustworthy, a better protector of refuge-seekers (or subordinates, servants, followers), kin of those in sorrow, benefactor of the meek and weak, and a treasury (fount) of mercy, compassion and grace than Lord Sri Ram?

कीबेको बिसोक लोक लोकपाल हुते सब,  
कहूँ कोऊ भो न चरवाहो कपि-भालुको ।  
पबिको पहारु कियो ख्यालही कृपाल राम,  
बापुरो बिभीषनु घरौंघा हुतो बालुको ।।  
नाम-ओट लेत ही निखोट होत खोटे खल,  
चोट बिनु मोट पाइ भयो न निहालु को ?

तुलसीकी बार बड़ी ढील होती सीलसिंधु!  
बिगरी सुधारिबेको दूसरो दयालु को ॥17॥

17. kibēkō bisōka lōka lōkapāla hutē saba,  
kahūm̐ kō'ū bhō na caravāhō kapi-bhālukō.  
pabikō pahāru kiyō khyālahī krpāla rāma,  
bāpurō bibhīsanu gharaundhā hutō bālukō..  
nāma-ōṭa lēta hī nikhōṭa hōta khōṭē khala,  
cōṭa binu mōṭa pā'i bhayō na nihālu kō?  
tulasīkī bāra barī ḍhīla hōti sīlasindhu!  
bigarī sudhāribēkō dūsarō dayālu kō..17..

Verse no. 7/17—The various Lokpals (custodians of the world, e.g. Indra) were there to look after the needs of, and eliminate the sorrows (troubles) of, the Lokas (worlds), but till now none of them had bothered about feeding and the general well-being of bears and monkeys.

Poor Vibhishan, who was as weak and fragile as a sand-house (like the ones made on the beach by children, it collapses almost immediately), was made strong and invincible like a mountain similar to Vajra (a weapon of Indra which is the strongest thing in existence as well as is invincible) by a mere wish of Lord Ram.

Corrupt and wicked people become free from sins immediately on taking the shelter of his (Ram's) holy Name. Indeed, who will not be satisfied (pleased and contented) by getting a bundle or pot of wealth (treasure) without having to make any effort for it?

[Saying of the Lord's name requires least of efforts; it is easy on the tongue and needs no special effort and time such as is required for doing Yoga and pursuing other means of attaining salvation and emancipation. But its benefits are immense. This is equivalent to getting a huge trove of treasure as reward without making the minimal of efforts to acquire it.]

Tulsidas lovingly complains to his Lord and says, 'Oh the ocean of virtuous qualities! You are not paying due attention towards me! Indeed, say, who can mend what has already gone wrong better than you? [That is, who can give salvation to this wretched Tulsidas, who has already wasted his life in vain, except you?]

नामु लिउँ पूतको पुनीत कियो पातकीसु,  
आरति निवारी 'प्रभु पाहि' कहें पीलकी।  
छलनिको छोड़ी, सो निगोड़ी छोटी जाति-पाँति  
कीन्ही लीन आपुमें सुनारी भोंड़े भीलकी॥  
तुलसी औ तोरिबो बिसारिबो न अंत मोहि,  
नीकें है प्रतीति रावरे सुभाव-सीलकी।  
देऊ, तौ दयानिकेत, देत दादि दीननको,  
मेरी बार मेरें ही अभाग नाथ ढील की ॥18॥

18. nāmu li'ēm̐ pūtakō punīta kiyō pātakīsu,  
ārati nivārī 'prabhu pāhi' kahēm̐ pīlakī.  
chalanikō chōṇḍī, sō nigōṛī chōṭī jāti-pām̐ti  
kīnhī līna āpumēm̐ sunārī bhōṇṛē bhīlakī..  
tulasī au tōribō bisāribō na anta mōhi,  
nīkēm̐ hai pratīti rāvarē subhāva-sīlakī.

dē'ū, tau dayānikēta, dēta dādi dīnanakō,  
mērī bāra mērēm hī abhāga nātha ḍhīla kī..18..

Verse no. 7/18—'You had purified the chief of sinners (Ajamil) when he called out the name of his son (Narain; this word happens to be one of the thousand names of Lord Vishnu), and removed the sorrows of Gaja (the elephant) as soon as he cried out 'save me Lord!' You had even merged the soul of that old Bhil woman (Sabari), who was the daughter of cunning (crafty, deceitful) parents, luckless, of low birth and ignorant and foolish, into your Supreme-Self.

Now, I pray, you give salvation to Tulsidas also. At last, don't forget me (or overlook me). I have great faith in your caring and merciful character. Oh God (Sri Ram)! You are the abode of mercy; you always help the poor. Oh Lord! (It appears that—) It is my bad luck that when my turn comes for liberation (from worldly bondages), you have become negligent (or you are showing lack of interest or enthusiasm in protecting me).

[It is not that Tulsidas is accusing the Lord with any malefic intention of giving him a bad name, but he is doing it in a lovable manner to draw his attention towards himself just like a child chides its mother of neglecting it inspite of knowing that the mother is extremely caring and loving, and no one loves the child more than the mother. The child feels that it needs to draw the mother's attention towards itself, though the mother is already caring for the child. The mother too does not take this chiding of her child seriously, and instead of feeling offended at the child's irreverent behaviour and getting angry at it, the emotions of love and affection begin to heave inside her bosom because she understands that the child has no one else to turn to vent its hurt feelings except her.] '

आगें परे पाहन कृपाँ किरात, कोलनी,  
कपीस, निसिचर अपनाए नाएँ माथ जू।  
साँची सेवकाई हनुमान की सुजानराय,  
रिनियाँ कहाए हौ, बिकाने ताके हाथ जू॥  
तुलसी-से खोटे खरे होत ओट नाम ही की,  
तेजी माटी मगहू की मृगमद साथ जू।  
बात चलें बातको न मानिबो बिलगु, बलि,  
काकीं सेवाँ रीझिकै नेवाजो रघुनाथ जू ? ॥19॥

19. āgēm parē pāhana krpām' kirāta, kōlanī,  
kapīsa, niscara apanā'ē nā'ēm' mātha jū.  
sām'cī sēvakā'ī hanumāna kī sujānarāya,  
riniyām' kahā'ē hau, bikānē tākē hātha jū..  
tulasī-sē khōṭē kharē hōta oṭa nāma hī kīm,  
tējī māṭī magahū kī mrgamada sātha jū.  
bāta calēm bātakō na mānibō bilagu, bali,  
kākīm sēvām' rījhikai nēvājō raghunātha jū?..19..

Verse no. 7/19—'Oh Lord! You had shown your kindness to the stone lying in your way (Ahilya), and had graciously accepted Kiraat, the Bhil-woman (Sabari), Sugriv and even the demon Vibhishan by their mere bowing their heads before you. Oh the best amongst the virtuous ones! It was Hanuman who had actually done true service to you, as a result of which you were indebted and obliged to him. Wicked liars like

Tulsidas become truthful on invoking your holy Name even as the mud on the way becomes invaluable on contact with musk. If I ask you something in this context, please do not mind. Oh Sri Ram! I beg to know from you, say, on whom have you shown kindness based on the quality of his service?

[Tulsidas means that the Lord is so magnanimous and gracious that he loves his poor and wretched devotee and follower out of simple affection for him, and not because he has served the Lord in any way better than the other. So, why is the Lord not paying heed to Tulsidas though he has not been able to serve the Lord according to his expectations? Tulsidas says 'Oh Lord. No one has served you so well as to please you sufficiently enough that you shower your kindness on him. Then why don't you show this same kindness on me also?']

कौसिककी चलत, पषानकी परस पाय  
 टूटत धनुष बनि गई है जनककी ।  
 कोल, पसु, सबरी, बिहंग, भालु, रातिचर,  
 रतिनके लालचिन प्रापति मनककी ।।  
 कोटि-कला-कुसल कृपाल नतपाल! बलि,  
 बातहू केतिक तिन तुलसी तनककी ।  
 राय दसरथके समथ राम राजमनि!  
 तेरें हेरें लोपै लिपि बिधिहू गनककी ।।20 ।।

20. kausikakī calata, paśānakī parasa pāya  
 tūṭata dhanuśa bani ga'ī hai janakakī.  
 kōla, pasu, sabarī, bihaṅga, bhālu, rāticara,  
 ratinakē lālacina prāpati manakakī..  
 kōṭi-kalā-kusala krpāla natapāla! bali,  
 bātahū kētika tina tulasī tanakakī.  
 rāya dasarat'thakē samat'tha rāma rājamani!  
 tērēm hērēm lōpai lipi bidhihū ganakakī..20..

Verse no. 7/20—'Kausik (sage Vishwamitra) was satisfied by your merely accompanying him; Ahilya, who was turned into stone, was liberated by your mere touch; and Janak's aim was fulfilled by the breaking of the bow which broke when you merely touched it.

The Kols, animals (monkeys and bears), Sabari, vulture (Jatau) and demons (Vibhishan) had some minor (small or trifle) desires (or expectations), but they were rewarded bountifully by you (i.e. they got more than what they had expected). Oh Lord who is an expert in millions (countless) of artful tactics, and who is a merciful protector of those who beg or request before you! I fondly beg before you! This humble-as-a-straw Tulsidas has very little to say (he is not demanding or expecting much). Oh king Dasrath's able and most exalted son, Sri Ram! Even the writings of a Brahma-like astrologer (the predictions of whom can't generally go wrong) can be waived or erased by as much as a wishful glance from you! [So, please be look at me with your merciful glance and have compassion for me. It is my firm belief that if you would as simply as look at me even in the passing, my fortunes would be made.]'

सिला-श्रापु पापु गुह-गीधको मिलापु  
 सबरीके पास आपु चलि गए हौ सो सुनी मैं ।  
 सेवक सराहे कपिनायकु बिभीषनु



भरतसभा सादर सनेह सुस्थुनी मैं ।।  
 आलसी-अभागी-अधी-आरत-अनाथपाल  
 साहेबु समर्थ एकु, नीकें मन गुनी मैं ।  
 दोष-दुख-दारिद-दलैया दीनबंधु राम !  
 'तुलसी' न दूसरो दयानिधानु दुनी मैं ।।21 ।।

21. silā-śrāpu pāpu guha-gīdhakō milāpu  
 sabarīkē pāsa āpu cali ga'e hau sō sunī maim.  
 sēvaka sarāhē kapināyaku bibhīśanu  
 bharatasabhā sādara sanēha suradhunī maim..  
 ālasī-abhāgī-aghī-ārata-anāthapāla  
 sāhēbu samartha ēku, nīkēm mana gunī maim.  
 dōśa-dukha-dārida-dalaiyā dīnabandhu rāma!  
 'tulasi' na dūsarō dayānidhānu dunī maim..21..

Verse no. 7/21—'I have already heard about the sin (of adultery) of the stone (Ahilya), your meeting with Nishad (boat-man) and vulture (Jatau), and that you had gone to Sabari on your own (without invitation). You had, in front of Bharat in the midst of the royal assembly, affectionately, respectfully and obligingly praised your servants (subordinates) such as the king of monkeys (Sugriv) and Vibhishan as being equal to the holy river Ganges in purity. I have carefully decided and have come to the conclusion that you are the only Lord who is an able sustainer of the indolent, luckless, sinners, distressed and destitute.'

Tulsidas says further, 'Oh Ram, the friend of the wretched! You are the eliminator of sins, sorrows and poverty. There is no one as merciful as you in this world.'

मीतु बालिबंधु, पूतु, दूतु, दसकंधबंधु  
 सचिव, सराधु कियो सबरी-जटाइको ।  
 लंक जरी जोहें जियँ सोचुसो बिभीषनुको,  
 कहौ ऐसे साहेबकी सेवाँ न खटाइ को ।।  
 बड़े एक-एकतैं अनेक लोक लोकपाल,  
 अपने-अपनेको तौ कहैगो घटाइ को ।  
 साँकरेके सेइबे, सराहिबे, सुमिरिबेको  
 रामु सो न साहेबु न कुमति-कटाइ को ।।22 ।।

22. mītu bālibandhu, pūtu, dūtu, dasakandhabandhu  
 saciva, sarādhū kiyō sabarī-jaṭā'ikō.  
 laṅka jarī jōhēm jiyam' sōcusō bibhīśanukō,  
 kahau aisē sāhēbakī sēvām' na khaṭā'i kō..  
 baṛē ēka-ēkatēm anēka lōēka lōkapāla,  
 apanē-apanēkō tau kahaigō ghaṭā'i kō.  
 sām'karēkē sē'ibē, sarāhibē, sumiribēkō  
 rāmu sō na sāhēbu na kumati-kaṭā'i kō..22..

Verse no. 7/22—He (Lord Ram) made Bali's brother (Sugriv) his friend, and the former's (Bali's) son (Angad) as his messenger; he made the brother of an arch enemy like Ravana one of his senior ministers (a reference to Vibhishan); he performed the last rites (funeral) of Jatau (a vulture) and Sabari (a low-born woman); and upon

seeing the burnt-out city of Lanka he felt guilty (instead of rejoicing at ruining an enemy's city, because he regretted that now he would have to give a burnt-out city while making Vibhishan its king).

Tulsidas wonders 'who would not succeed in the service of such a kind and obliging Lord?' There are numerous Lokas (worlds) and each has its own Lord. Who will dare or want to call any of these Lords inferior to the other? But Tulsidas says that as far as he is concerned, there is no other Lord more gracious, kind, merciful, munificent and benevolent than Lord Ram who can be served by those overcome by misfortunes and miseries, who is worthy of more praise and honour, and who can be remembered with more reverence and love.

भूमिपाल, ब्यालपाल, नाकपाल, लोकपाल  
कारन कृपाल, मैं सबैके जीकी थाह ली।  
कादरको आदरु काहूँ नहिं देखिअत,  
सबनि सोहात है सेवा-सुजानि टाहली॥  
तुलसी सुभायँ कहै, नहिं कछु पछपातु,  
कोनै ईस किए कीस भालु खास माहली।  
रामही के द्वारे पै बोलाइ सनमानिअत  
मोसे दीन दूबरे कपूत कूर काहली॥२३॥

23. bhūmipāla, byālapāla, nākapāla, lōkapāla  
kāraṇa kṛpāla, maim̐ sabaikē jīkī thāha lī.  
kādarakō ādaru kāhūkēm nāhīm̐ dēkhi'ata,  
sabani sōhāta hai sēvā-sujāni ṭāhalī..  
tulasī subhāyam̐ kahai, nāhīm̐ kachu pacchapātu,  
kaunēm̐ īsa ki'ē kīsa bhālu khāsa māhalī.  
rāmahi kē dvārē pai bōlā'i sanamāni'ata  
mōsē dīna dūbarē kapūta kūra kāhalī..23..

Verse no. 7/23—The kings of the earth (terrestrial world), the kings of serpents (subterranean world), the Gods of heaven (celestial world), and the Lokpals (custodians of all the directions of the world)—all of them show kindness due to some vested interest (i.e. they are selfish). I have measured (found out) their hearts (intentions). No one respects cowards and the downtrodden; everyone prefers (is pleased with) expert helpers/subordinates.

Tulsidas says what he feels is the truth; he does not take sides with any one. Say, which master or lord has made bears and monkeys servants of his personal palace or residence (i.e. kept them in his personal service and close to him) like Lord Ram has done? It is only at the door of Lord Ram that wretched, weak, meek, unworthy, cowards and indolent like me (Tulsidas) are summoned and given due respect, are shown kindness and mercy.

सेवा अनुरूप फल देत भूप कूप ज्यों,  
बिहूने गुन पथिकपिआसे जात पथके।  
लेखें-जोखें चोखें चित 'तुलसी' स्वारथ हित,  
नीकें देखे देवता देवैया घने गथके॥  
गीधु मानो गुरु कपि-भालु माने मीत कै,  
पुनीत गीत साके सब साहेब समत्थके।  
और भूप परखि सुलाखि तौलि ताइ लेत,

लसमके खसमु तुहीं पै दसरत्थके ।।24 ।।

24. sēvā anurūpa phala dēta bhūpa kūpa jyōm,  
bihūnē guna pathikapi'āsē jāta pathakē.  
lēkhēm-jōkhēm cōkhēm cita 'tulasī' svāratha hita,  
nīkhēm dēkhē dēvatā dēvaiyā ghanē gathakē..  
gīdhu mānō guru kapi-bhālu mānē mīta kai,  
punīta gīta sākē saba sāhēba samat'thakē.  
aura bhūpa parakhi sulākhi tauli tā'i lēta,  
lasamakē khasamu tuhīm pai dasarat'thakē..24..

Verse no. 7/24—The kings of this world give rewards according to the service rendered to them much like a well which gives water to the thirsty only if they have a rope to pull water out of it with the help of a bucket. Otherwise, they go thirsty inspite of there being a lot of water in the well. [It means that like water cannot be drawn from a well without a rope, one cannot expect anything from a king without possessing some quality that is of some benefit for the king].

Tulsidas says that by all accounts considered by a cool head (i.e. after proper calculations and deliberations), he has come to the conclusion that there are many Gods who give wealth and boons for some vested self interest or expectations from their worshippers. But Sri Ram is a selfless Lord because he even regarded a vulture (Jatau) as his Guru (father) and treated bears and monkeys as his friends. The Lord's glorious stories and famed deeds are pure and purifying for the soul to sing.

Whereas all other kings accept a servant after properly testing him like one does while purchasing gold or other valuable items by properly testing their purity, ascertaining their value, weight etc., the son of Dasrath (Sri Ram) is the only refuge for the worthless wretches. [Those who have no succour and solace anywhere in this world, those who are rejected by the world as being worthless, they find refuge with Lord Ram. He accepts all those rejected by other kings and the world without asking them any question as to their worthiness. He accepts them with open arms and without reservations of any kind.]

रीति महाराजकी, नेवाजिए जो माँगनो, सो  
दोष-दुख-दारिद्र दारिद्र कै-कै छोड़िए ।  
नामु जाको कामतरु देत फल चारि, ताहि  
'तुलसी' बिहाइकै बबूर-रेंड़ गोड़िए ।।  
जाचै को नरेस, देस-देसको कलेसु करै  
देहैं तो प्रसन्न हैं बड़ी बड़ाई बौड़िए ।  
कृपा-पाथनाथ लोकनाथ-नाथ सीतानाथ  
तजि रघुनाथ हाथ और काहि ओड़िये ।।25 ।।

25. rīti mahārājakī, nēvāji'ē jō māmṅanō, sō  
dōśa-dukha-dāridra daridra kai-kai chōḍiē.  
nāmu jākō kāmataru dēta phala cāri, tāhi  
'tulasī' bihā'ikai babūra-rēṇṇa gōḍiē..  
jācai kō narēsa, dēsa-dēsakō kalēsu karai  
dēhaim tau prasanna hvai baṛi baṛā'i bauḍiē.  
krpā-pāthanātha lōkanātha-nātha sītānātha

taji raghunātha hātha aura kāhi ōḍiyē..25..

Verse no. 7/25—It is the natural tendency or an established tradition with the Lord (Sri Ram) that once he accepts someone, he reduces his sins, sorrows and wants to a minimal fraction possible. His name is like a Kalpa Tree (the evergreen tree of the gods that is able to give any desired fruit) that provides all the four celebrated fruits (rewards) of Artha (wealth), Dharma (righteousness), Kaam (fulfilled desires) and Moksha (salvation) to the devotee just for the asking.

Tulsidas says who would (i.e. is foolish enough to) plant Acacia and Castor plants (instead of such a wonderful Kalpa Tree)? Who would beg before worldly kings? Who would take the trouble to go on long voyages to earn money? If anyone giver of alms is pleased, he would give a penny at the most, excepting Sri Ram of course, for he is an ocean of mercy and kindness, and the Lord of the Lokpals. [That is, Lord Ram is like an Emperor as compared to other charitable kings and alms-givers.]

In front of whom else should one stretch one's hand to seek anything?

जाकैं बिलोकत लोकप होत, बिसोक लहैं सुरलोग सुवैरहि ।  
सो कमला तजि चंचलता, करि कोटि कला रिझवै सुरमौरहि ।।  
ताको कहाइ, कहै तुलसी, तूँ लजाहि न मागत कूकुर-कौरहि ।  
जानकी-जीवनको जनु है जरि जाउ सो जीह जो जाचत औरहि ।।26 ।।

26. jākēm bilōkata lōkapa hōta, bisōka lahairi suralōga suṭhaurahi.  
sō kamalā taji cañcalatā, kari kōṭi kalā rijhavai suramaurahi..  
tākō kahā'i, kahai tulasī, tūm' lajāhi na māgata kūkura-kaurahi.  
jānakī-jīvanakō janu hvai jari jā'u sō jīha jō jācata aurahi..26..

Verse no. 7/26—Laxmi (the goddess of wealth), whose mere benign glance can make a man a King of men and the Gods receive comfortable and pleasant abodes, abandons her naturally transient and restless character and tries to enchant Lord Ram in the form of Lord Vishnu by using numerous methods.

Tulsidas asks himself—'Don't you feel ashamed at yourself at asking for morsels of leftover food that is thrown to a dog (i.e. asking for worthless things, or small favours and comforts) while calling yourself a servant (or devotee) of such a great Lord as Sri Ram? Being servants of Sri Ram, those who seek anything from anyone else—let their tongues be burnt! [That is, it is a matter of great shame, ignominy and self-insult that one should request anything from anyone else, such as Gods, Goddesses and others, when one has Lord Ram as his benevolent and most magnanimous all-round protector and sustainer.]'

जड पंच मिलै जेहिं देह करी, करनी लखु धौं धरनीधरकी ।  
जनकी कहु, क्यों करिहै न सँभार, जो सार करै सचराचरकी ।।  
तुलसी!कहु राम समान को आन है, सेवकि जासु रमा घरकी ।  
जगमें गति जाहि जगत्पतिकी परवाह है ताहि कहा नरकी ।।27 ।।

27. jaḍa pañca milai jēhim dēha karī, karanī lakhu dhauri dharanīdharakī.  
janakī kahu, kyōm karihai na sambhāra, jō sāra karai sacarācarakī..  
tulasī!kahu rāma samāna kō āna hai, sēvaki jāsū ramā gharakī.

jagamēm gati jāhi jagatpatikī paravāha hai tāhi kahā narakī..27..

Verse no. 7/27—Indeed, marvel at the art of that Lord of the land (here implying the universe) who had moulded this (live) body out of the five inanimate substances (air, water, earth, fire, sky). If he can look after (i.e. sustain) all the animate as well as the inanimate creation, say, why would he not look after his devotees (who is completely dependent upon him)?

Tulsidas addresses himself, saying, 'Oh Tulsidas, say who is comparable to Lord Ram whose household maid is Laxmi (the goddess of wealth and prosperity) herself? Anyone who relies on such an able Lord should not bother about having to please others.'

जग जाचिअ कोउ न, जाचिअ जौ जियँ जाचिअ जानकीजानहि रे।  
जेहि जाचत जाचकता जरि जाइ, जो जारति जोर जहानहि रे॥  
गति देखु बिचारि बिभीषनकी, अरु आनु हिउँ हनुमानहि रे।  
तुलसी ! भजु दारिद-दोष-दवानल संकट-कोटि-कृपानहि रे॥28॥

28. jaga jāci'a kō'u na, jāci'a jauṁ jiyam' jāci'a jānakījānahi rē.  
jēhi jācata jācakatā jari jā'i, jō jārati jōra jahānahi rē..  
gati dēkhu bicāri bibhīśanakī, aru ānu hi'ēm' hanumānahi rē.  
tulasī! bhaju dārida-dōśa-davānala saṅkaṭa-kōṭi-krpānahi rē..28..

Verse no. 7/28—One should not beg for anything from anyone in this world. If it is necessary to ask, then one should ask from Lord Ram silently (i.e. prayerfully, quietly, mentally, without making a show of it), because as soon as one seeks from him, the seeker's wants and shortages—his poverty and desires which are burning (tormenting) the world endlessly—are burnt (i.e. eliminated) instantly themselves. [This world is constantly suffering from desires of one or the other kind. Sri Ram is capable of exhausting this fuel of 'desire', thereby giving immense relief to this turbulent and tormented world.]

Consider the condition of Vibhishan and remember that of Hanuman. Tulsidas says to himself, 'Oh Tulsidas! Worship Sri Ram, who is like a 'Davanal' (the dooms-day fire; the wild forest fire) to burn the sins in the shape of poverty, and is like a sword to cut down millions of (countless) troubles.'

### The Enlightenment Or Awakening (Advice of Tulsidas)

सुनु कान दिउँ, नितु नेमु लिउँ रघुनाथहिके गुनगाथहि रे।  
सुखमंदिर सुंदर रूपु सदा उर आनि धरें धनु-भाथहि रे॥  
रसना निसि-बासर सादर सौं तुलसी! जपु जानकीनाथहि रे।  
करु संग सुसील सुसंतन सौं, तजि कूर, कपंथ कुसाथहि रे॥29॥

29. sunu kāna di'ēm', nitu nēmu li'ēm' raghunāthahikē gunagāthahi rē.  
sukhamandira suṁdara rūpu sadā ura āni dharēm dhanu-bhāthahi rē..  
rasanā nisi-bāsara sādara sōm' tulasī! japu jānakīnāthahi rē.  
karu saṅga susīla susantana sōm', taji kūra, kapantha kusāthahi rē..29..

Verse no. 7/29—[Tulsidas gives this wise advice—] 'Oh Tulsidas! Hear the virtuous stories of Sri Ram with full ears (i.e. with full attention and devotion). Always remember (think of) Lord Sri Ram's beauteous and charming countenance (form) that holds a bow and arrow, for he is the abode of all bliss. Chant Sri Ram's holy Name respectfully with your tongue day and night. Always keep the company of virtuous, noble and saintly persons, and forsake or abandon any kind of contact or dealings with persons who are deceitful. Avoid the path that is unrighteous and improper, and abhor bad company.'

सुत, दार, अगारु, सखा, परिवारु बिलोकु महा कुसमाजहि रे।  
सबकी ममता तजि कै, समता सजि, संतसभाँ न बिराजहि रे॥  
नरदेह कहा, करि देखु बिचारु, बिगारु गँवार न काजहि रे।  
जनि डोलहि लोलुप कूकरु ज्यो, तुलसी भजु कोसलराजहि रे॥30॥

30. suta, dāra, agāru, sakhā, parivāru bilōku mahā kusamājahi rē.  
sabakī mamatā taji kai, samatā saji, santasabhām̐ na birājahi rē..  
naradēha kahā, kari dēkhu bicāru, bigāru gamvāra na kājahi rē.  
jani ḍōlahi lōlupa kūkaru jyōm, tulasī bhaju kōsalarājahi rē..30..

Verse no. 7/30—'You should consider as a great and evil company your son, wife, household, friends and family—you should leave attachments towards them and be indifferent towards them. Why don't you stay in the assembly (company) of saints instead? What is the purpose of having this body, have you ever wondered? Just think over it.'

Tulsidas says to himself, 'Oh you idiot! Don't spoil the work and lose the golden opportunity. Don't wander aimlessly like a greedy dog, and instead worship Lord Ram.'

[Tulsidas has compared the body of a man entangled in the world to that of a dog who goes from one household to another one seeking morsels of food, and getting insulted and shooed away. The stupid dog nibbles at a dry piece of bone and thinks that it has got the treasure of its life. Well, a man has got a human body, and it is a golden opportunity given to him to seek final liberation and freedom from the chain of endless birth and death. And he must not let go of this once-in-a-life time chance. Worldly relationships are always entangling and based on selfishness. A person is loved or wanted only till the time he meets the demands of those around them or serves their self-interest. Otherwise, the world begins to treat him as dust. So Tulsidas advises that it is better to be in the company of wise saints because this would help the person develop renunciation with the world of artificiality and instead develop attachment with the world of reality and truth—i.e. the world related to the Atma and the Parmatma, the world of self-realisation and spiritual truth that leads to one's emancipation and salvation.]

बिषया परनारि निसा-तरुनाई सो पाइ पर्यो अनुरागहि रे।  
जमके पहरु दुख, रोग बियोग बिलोकत हू न बिरागहि रे॥  
ममता बस तैं सब भूलि गयो, भयो भोरु महा भय, भागहि रे।  
जरठाइ दिसाँ, रबिकालु उग्यो, अजहूँ जइ जीव! न जागहि रे॥31॥

31. biśayā paranāri nisā-tarunā'ī sō pā'i paryō anurāgahi rē.  
 jamakē paharū dukha, rōga biyōga bilōkata hū na birāgahi rē..  
 mamatā basa tair̥m saba bhūli gayō, bhayō bhōru mahā bhaya, bhāgahi rē.  
 jaraṭhā'i disām̐, rabikālu ugyō, ajahūm̐ jaṛa jīva! na jāgahi rē..31..

Verse no. 7/31—'In the night of youthfulness you have become enamoured of the pleasures of the senses (in the form of another person's woman). You do not get renunciation (or are not inspired) even after looking at the gate keepers of Yam (the God of Death and Hell) in the form of sorrows, diseases, separations and various losses that you witness happening all around you in this horrifying world. You have forgotten all the horrors of your previous life and those suffered by you in the past in this life itself due to attachments and delusions that surround you. Now it is dawn, so wake up and run away from all this great fear created by ignorance. The death and its attendant agonies in the shape of a sun have risen in the east represented by your old age. Oh you dud! You still don't wake up, how utterly stupid you are!'

जनम्यो जेहिं जोनि, अनेक क्रिया सुख लागि करी, न परै बरनी ।  
 जननी-जनकादि हितू भये भूरि बहोरि भई उरकी जरनी ।।  
 तुलसी ! अब रामको दासु कहाइ, हिउँ धरु चातककी धरनी ।  
 करि हंसको बेषु बड़ो सबसों, तजि दे बक-बायसकी करनी ।।32 ।।

32. janamyō jēhim̐ jōni, anēka kriyā sukha lāgi karīm̐, na paraim̐ baranī.  
 janani-janakādi hitū bhayē bhūri bahōri bha'ī urakī jaranī..  
 tulasī! aba rāmakō dāsu kahā'i, hi'ēm̐ dharu cātakakī dharanī.  
 kari hansakō bēśu baṛō sabasōm̐, taji dē baka-bāyasakī karanī..32..

Verse no. 7/32—'From whichever womb you had emerged (took birth as whatever type of creature), you did so many types of deeds (made so many efforts) for obtaining happiness. You had many favourites (in the beginning) such as parents, kin etc., but later on they were cause of heart-burn.'

Tulsidas talks about himself saying, 'At least, and at last, become a servant of Sri Ram even now and assume the temperament and demeanours of a Chatak (if you want real peace and happiness). [This bird does not seek water from any one except the rain-bearing cloud. Likewise, Tulsidas advises that one should also not seek anything from anyone else except Sri Ram].

You have assumed the form of a great and noble bird known as the Swan, and do the despicable deeds of like that of a crane/stork and a crow—you should stop this falsehood forthwith. [Tulsidas says that you pretend to be wise and learned like the bird swan that is considered a wise bird because it has the uncanny ability to pick up pearls amongst an assortment of gems, and drinks pure milk and leaves behind the water content that adulterates it. But your deeds are quite the opposite—for you are cunning, deceitful and clever like a crow and a stork. This is not good for you, because you are not only cheating the world but also cheating your own self.] '

भलि भारतभूमि, भलें कुल जन्मु, समाजु सरीरु भलो लहि कै ।  
 करुषा तजि कै परुषा बरुषा हिम, मारुत, घाम सदा सहि कै ।।  
 जो भजै भगवानु सयान सोई, 'तुलसी' हठ चातकु ज्यो गहि कै ।

नतु और सबै बिषबीज बाए, हर हाटक कामदुहा नहि कै ।।33 ।।

33. bhali bhāratabhūmi, bhalēm kula janmu, samāju sarīru bhalō lahi kai.  
karaśā taji kai parusā baraśā hima, māruta, ghāma sadā sahi kai..  
jō bhajai bhagavānu sayāna sō'i, 'tulasī' haṭha cātaku jyōm gahi kai.  
natu aura sabai biśabīja ba'ē, hara hāṭaka kāmduhā nahi kai..33..

Verse no. 7/33—'You have taken birth in the holy land of Bharat (India), in an exalted clan (Arya), and have found a good society and body.' Tulsidas says that in such a fortunate circumstance, a person who abandons anger and harsh words, tolerates rain, winter (cold), wind (storms) and heat (summer), and always worships Lord Ram with concerted and focused devotion like the Chatak bird (as described in verse no. 32)—such a person is to be considered wise and clever. Otherwise, all others (except Sri Ram's sincere devotees) are using a golden plough harnessed to a Kamdhenu cow, but sowing seeds of poison. [He means that these people are spoiling the opportunity offered to them, and in spite of having a golden plough and the all wish-fulfilling cow at their disposal, they are sowing worthless seeds by pursuing this world of delusions and the pleasures of the sense organs, instead of devoting their time in thinking of their salvation and emancipation by adopting the easy path of having devotion for Lord Ram and invoking his merciful Name. How foolish of them if they don't do it!]

जो सुकृती सुचिमत सुसंत, सुजान सुसीलसिरोमनि स्वै ।  
सुर-तीरथ तासु मनावत आवत, पावन होत हैं ता तनु छवै ।।  
गुनगेहु सनेहको भाजनु सो, सब ही सों उठाइ कहौ भुज द्वै ।  
सतिभायँ सदा छल छाड़ि सबै 'तुलसी' जो रहै रघुबीरको है ।।34 ।।

34. jō sukrīti sucimanta susanta, sujāna susīlasirōmani svai.  
sura-tīratha tāsu manāvata āvata, pāvana hōta haiṁ tā tanu chvai..  
gunagēhu sanēhakō bhājanu sō, saba hī sōm uṭhā'i kahauṁ bhuja dvai.  
satibhāyam sadā chala chāḍi sabai 'tulasī' jō rahai raghubīrakō hvai..34..

Verse no. 7/34—Tulsidas says, 'I raise my hands and declare solemnly that those persons who abandon all deceit and falsehood and surrender themselves to Lord Ram by all means, are the 'Sadhus'—those persons who are holy, pious and pure at heart, those who are virtuous, noble, worthy and most exalted. Even the Gods and the pilgrim cities come to them when they wish to see or visit them, and these entities themselves become pure and holy when they are touched by such exalted Sadhus. Indeed, such persons become a treasury of all goodness and virtues, and they get universal affection and respect from all.'

### Prayers

सो जननी, सो पिता, सोइ भाइ, सो भामिनि, सो सुतु, सो हितु मेरो ।  
सोइ सगो, सो सखा, सोइ सेवकु, सो गुरु, सो सुरु, साहेबु चेरो ।।  
सो 'तुलसी' प्रिय प्रान समान, कहाँ लौ बनाइ कहौ बहुतेरो ।  
जो तजि देहको, गेहको नेहु, सनेहसौ रामको होइ सबेरो ।।35 ।।



35. sō janani, sō pitā, sō'i bhā'i, sō bhāmini, sō sutu, sō hitu mērō.  
 sō'i sagō, sō sakhā, sō'i sēvaku, sō guru, sō suru, sāhēbu cērō..  
 sō 'tulasī' priya prāna samāna, kahām' laum' banā'i kahaur' bahutērō.  
 jō taji dēhakō, gēhakō nēhu, sanēhasōm rāmakō hō'i sabērō..35..

Verse no. 7/35—Tulsidas says, 'A person who abandons attractions or attachments towards his body and household, and surrenders himself, unconditionally and without reservations, to Lord Ram as soon as possible—such an exalted person is like my mother, father, brother, wife, son, benefactor, kin, a true friend, a faithful and obedient servant/subordinate, guru (teacher), Lord (God), master et al—in fact every relation that exists is embodied in him. What more can I say, he becomes dearer to me than my own life.'

रामु हैं मातु, पिता, गुरु, बंधु, औ संगी, सखा, सुतु, स्वामि, सनेही ।  
 रामकी सौह, भरोसो है रामको, राम रँग्यो, रुचि राच्यो न केही ।।  
 जीअत रामु, मुएँ पुनि रामु, सदा रघुनाथहि की गति जेही ।  
 सोई जिऐ जगमें, 'तुलसी' नतु डोलत और मुए धरि देही ।।36 ।।

36. rāmu hair' mātu, pitā, guru, bandhu, au saṅgī, sakhā, sutu, svāmi,  
 sanēhī.  
 rāmakī saunha, bharōsō hai rāmakō, rāma raṅgyō, ruci rācyō na kēhī..  
 jī'ata rāmu, mu'ēm' puni rāmu, sadā raghunāthahi kī gati jēhīm.  
 sō'ī jī'ai jagamēm, 'tulasī' natu ḍōlata aura mu'e dhari dēhī..36..

Verse no. 7/36—'Sri Ram is my mother, father, teacher, friend, companion, son and Lord, and the dearest. I swear in the name of Sri Ram that I rely only upon him. I have coloured myself in his paint (i.e. I have lost any other identity except as an ardent devotee of Sri Ram). And I don't find interest in anyone else except my Lord Sri Ram.' [Refer also to verse no. 7/178 herein below which expresses the same view.]

Tulsidas further says, 'He who is dear to Lord Ram while alive and becomes one with Sri Ram after death, who has only one reliance of Lord Ram in his life—he is the one who actually 'lives' in this world fruitfully, while all others are really dead, though they have a body which moves and speaks.'

### Devotion To Ram Is The Essence of spiritualism

सियराम-सरूपु अगाध अनूप बिलोचन-मीननको जलु है ।  
 श्रुति रामकथा, मुख रामको नामु, हिउँ पुनि रामहिको थलु है ।।  
 मति रामहि सौं, गति रामहि सौं, रति रामसौं, रामहि को बलु है ।  
 सबकी न कहै, तुलसीके मते इतनो जग जीवनको फलु है ।।37 ।।

37. siyarāma-sarūpu agādha anūpa bilōcana-mīnanakō jalu hai.  
 śruti rāmakathā, mukha rāmakō nāmu, hi'ēm' puni rāmahikō thalu hai..  
 mati rāmahi sōm, gati rāmahi sōm, rati rāmasōm, rāmahi kō balu hai.  
 sabakī na kahai, tulasikē matēm itanō jaga jīvanakō phalu hai..37..

Verse no. 7/37—The peerless and most beautiful image (vision) of Lord Ram and Sita is like a fathomless body of water for the fish in the form of the eyes. To have

ears that hear the stories of Lord Ram, the mouth that chants the name of Lord Ram, the heart in which Lord Ram resides, the mind and the intellect that is engrossed in the thoughts of Lord Ram, to have Lord Ram as the only reliance in this world, to have affection and devotion only for Lord Ram, and to regard Lord Ram as the only source of strength and support—Tulsidas says that he does not know about others, but for him (i.e. according to his wisdom) this is the only fruit (benefit) of taking birth (living) in this world as a living being.

दसरत्थके दानि सिरोमनि राम! पुरान प्रसिद्ध सुन्यो जसु मैं।  
नर नाग सुरासुर जाचक जो, तुमसों मन भावत पायो न कै॥  
तुलसी कर जोरि करै बिनती, जो कृपा करि दीनदयाल सुनै।  
जेहि देह सनेहु न रावरे सों, असि देह धराइ कै जायँ जियै॥३८॥

38. *dasarāt'thakē dāni sirōmani rāma! purāna prasid'dha sun'yō jasu mair̥m.*  
*nara nāga surāsura jācaka jō, tumaśōm mana bhāvata pāyō na kair̥m..*  
*tulasī kara jōri karai binatī, jō kṛpā kari dīnadayāla sunair̥m.*  
*jēhi dēha sanēhu na rāvarē sōm, asi dēha dharā'i kai jāyam̐ jiyair̥m..38..*

Verse no. 7/38—'Oh Lord Sri Ram, the son of Dasrath and the best amongst donors I have heard of your fame and noble character being sung by the Purans. Among the humans, the serpents (i.e. creatures of the subterranean world), the Gods and the demons—say, who has not got his desires fulfilled by seeking from you oh Lord?

If the Lord, who is kind towards the distressed and the poor, is kind enough to hear what I say, then this Tulsidas prays with folded hands that it is useless to have a body and live with it without having affection and devotion for you.' [Amongst all the living beings in this creation, only those creatures who have devotion for Sri Ram are fruitfully living and putting their life and their bodies to good use; the rest of them are as good as dead.]

### World is an Illusion

झूठे है, झूठे है, झूठे सदा जगु, संत कहंत जे अंतु लहा है।  
ताको सहे सठ! संकट कोटिक, काढ़त दंत, करंत हहा है॥  
जानपनीको गुमान बड़ो, तुलसीके बिचार गँवार महा है।  
जानकीजीवनु जान न जान्यो तौ जान कहावत जान्यो कहा है॥३९॥

39. *jhūṭhō hai, jhūṭhō hai, jhūṭhō sadā jagu, santa kahanta jē antu lahā hai.*  
*tākō sahai saṭha! saṅkaṭa kōṭika, kāṛhata danta, karanta hahā hai..*  
*jānapanīkō gumāna barō, tulasīkē bicāra gam̐vāra mahā hai.*  
*jānakījīvanu jāna na jān'yō tau jāna kahāvata jān'yō kahā hai..39..*

Verse no. 7/39—Tulsidas addresses himself and says—'Oh you wicked fellow! Those saints who have realised the true nature of this world (literally, measured the world) repeatedly assert that it is deluding, false and illusionary, but you suffer for it (in trying to enjoy it or please it or acquire it), and you express lamentations or regrets (at not being successful at it) by baring your teeth. You seem to be very proud of your wisdom', but according to Tulsidas, 'you are a great fool. If you could not realise (the true nature of) Lord Ram, then you have not actually realised anything.'

तिन्ह तें खर, सूकर, स्वान भले, जड़ता बस ते न कहैं कछु वै।  
 'तुलसी' जेहि रामसों नेहु नहीं सो सही पसु पूँछ, बिषान न द्वै।  
 जननी कत भार मुई दस मास, भई किन बाँझ, गई किन चै।  
 जरि जाउ सो जीवनु, जानकीनाथ! जियै जगमें तुम्हरो बिनु है।।40।।

40. *tinha tēm khara, sūkara, svāna bhalē, jaratā basa tē na kahaim kachu vai.*  
*'tulasī' jēhi rāmasōm nēhu nahīm sō sahī pasu pūm̐cha, biśāna na dvai.*  
*jananī kata bhāra mu'ī dasa māsa, bha'ī kina bām̐jha, ga'ī kina cvai.*  
*jari jā'u sō jīvanu, jānakīnātha! jiyai jagamēm tumharō binu hvai..40..*

Verse no. 7/40—Tulsidas says that those who do not have affection for Lord Ram are really as good as animals—they only lack a tail and two horns. Even dogs, donkeys and pigs are better than them, because being animals, they at least keep quiet (i.e. don't boast that they are wise and fortunate). Why did their mothers not die while they were in their wombs, why did not she become barren, or why did she not abort? Oh Sri Janki Nath (Sri Ram). Those who live a life devoid of you are worth burning to ashes. [Tulsidas means that a life devoid of affection and devotion towards Sri Ram is futile, useless and not worth living.]

गज-बाजि-घटा, भले भूरि भटा, बनिता, सुत भौह तकैं सब वै।  
 धरनी, धनु धाम सरीरु भलो, सुरलोकहु चाहि इहै सुख स्वै॥  
 सब फोटक साटक है तुलसी, अपनो न कछू सपनो दिन द्वै।  
 जरि जाउ सो जीवन जानकीनाथ! जियै जगमें तुम्हरो बिनु है।।41।।

41. *gaja-bāji-ghatā, bhalē bhūri bhaṭā, banitā, suta bhaunha takaim saba vai.*  
*dharanī, dhanu dhāma sarīru bhalō, suralōkahu cāhi ihai sukha svai..*  
*saba phōṭaka sāṭaka hai tulasī, apanō na kachū sapanō dina dvai.*  
*jari jā'u sō jīvana jānakīnātha! jiyai jagamēm tumharō binu hvai..41..*

Verse no. 7/41—One has all the comforts and wealth of this world—such as many elephants and horses, many good warriors at service, wife and sons who are obedient, abundance of land and wealth, a comfortable household and a healthy body—are all favourable and according to one's liking, and one enjoys comforts greater than the abode of Gods. But Tulsidas says that all this is futile, useless and without meaning and substance; nothing belongs to us. All this is a two-day dream (i.e. temporary, transient).

Oh Lord Sri Ram, the Lord of Janki (Sita)! Those who live in this world devoid of your grace and having devotion for you, let their life be burnt to ashes (i.e. it is useless to live such a life, so let it perish).

सुरराज सो राज-समाजु, समृद्धि बिरंचि, धनाधिप-सो धनु भो।  
 पवमानु-सो पावकु-सो, जमु, सोमु-सो, पूषनु-सो भवभूषनु भो॥  
 करि जोग, समीरन साधि, समाधि कै धीर बड़ो, बसहू मनु भो।  
 सब जाय, सुभायँ कहै तुलसी, जो न जानकीजीवनको जनु भो।।42।।

42. *surarāja sō rāja-samāju, samṛd'dhi biran̐ci, dhanādhīpa-sō dhanu bhō.*  
*pavamānu-sō pāvaku-sō, jamu, sōmu-sō, pūśanu-sō bhavabhūśanu bhō..*

kari jōga, samīrana sādhi, samādhi kai dhīra barō, basahū manu bhō.  
saba jāya, subhāyam<sup>3</sup> kahai tulasī, jō na jānakījīvanakō janu bhō..42..

Verse no. 7/42—A person may possess royal paraphernalia and regal grandeur comparable to Indra, fame and renown comparable to Brahma, wealth and prosperity comparable to Kuber, may be swift like the wind, splendid and dazzling like the fire, scepter-wielder like the Yam (God of Death and Hell), be soothing, cool and producer of love and affectionate feelings like the moon, be an illuminator of the world like the sun, be an ornament of the world (i.e. most worthy); be very fortitudinous and tolerant by meditating and practicing Yoga that enables one to exercise exemplary control over the power of wind (breath)—inspite of all the above eclectic qualities that one possesses, Tulsidas says truthfully that if one does not become a servant (devotee, follower) of Lord Ram, then all these achievements are futile and worthless.

कामु-से रूप, प्रताप दिनेसु-से, सोमु-से सील, गनेसु-से माने ।  
हरिचंदु-से साँचे, बड़े बिधि-से, मघवा-से महीप बिषै-सुख-साने ।।  
सुक-से मुनि, सारद-से बकता, चिरजीवन लोमस तें अधिकाने ।  
ऐसे भए तौ कहा 'तुलसी', जो पै राजिवलोचन रामु न जाने ।।43।।

43. kāmū-sē rūpa, pratāpa dinēsu-sē, sōmu-sē sīla, ganēsu-sē mānē.  
haricandu-sē sām<sup>3</sup>cē, barē bidhi-sē, maghavā-sē mahīpa biśai-sukha-sānē..  
suka-sē muni, sārada-sē bakatā, cirajīvana lōmasa tēm adhikānē.  
aisē bha'ē tau kahā 'tulasī', jō pai rājivalōcana rāmu na jānē..43..

Verse no. 7/43—If a man did not realise (recognise) who Sri Ram, the lotus-eyed Lord, is, then what is the use of his possessing other exceptional qualities and characters, such as for example his being as attractive and charming in appearance as Kamdeo (the most charming and attractive god in physical beauty), his being as radiant and dazzling in personality as the sun itself, his being as soothing and comforting as the moon, his being as respected and honoured as Lord Ganesh (the elephant-headed god who is the most revered god and worshipped before other gods during any religious ceremony), his being equivalent to king Harischandra<sup>1</sup> in upholding the virtues of truthfulness, his being as exalted as the creator Brahma, his being able to enjoy a kingly life like that of Indra (the king of gods who enjoys the best of kingly life in this creation), his being as wise and learned as the parrot sage known as Sukdeo (who had recited the Sri Bhagwat Maha Puran), his being an expert orator like goddess Saraswati herself, and his having a life longer than sage Lomash (who is said to have an eternal life).

[In other words, all the eclectic qualities that exist in this world would be of no value and would not make a man worthy of respect and honour if he does not have the wisdom to know the reality of Lord Ram as a personified form of the Supreme Being.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>King Harischandra/Harishchandra—He was a great king of the Ikswaku dynasty in which Lord Ram, one of the major incarnations of Lord Vishnu, was born. Harishchandra was the son of king Trishanku. Once, his royal priest, sage Vashistha, had praised him in the heavenly court of Indra, the king of Gods, for his truthfulness and adherence to words of honour. Another great sage known by the name

Vishwamitra wanted to test the varacity of Vashistha's statement and find flaws with it because he was a traditional rival of Vashistha.

So, Vishwamitra approached Harishchandra and asked for his entire kingdom as donation. Harishchandra gladly gave it, but Vishwamitra was not satisfied. He asked for 'Dakshina'—the traditional token money that is given to a visiting Brahmin after his demands are met. Having already given his entire kingdom to Vishwamitra, the poor Harishchandra had nothing left to give, so he went out of the kingdom to search for sufficient funds to pay Vishwamitra. He sold off his son and wife, and himself took up service with a Chandala, the low-caste men who perform last rites of dead on the banks of a river, at the pilgrim town of Varanasi.

To test his resolution, Vishwamitra assumed the form of a serpent and bit the infant child of Harishchandra, whereby he died. The mother brought the dead child for cremation at Varanasi, but Harishchandra demanded the traditional fees from her. When the poor lady could not pay it, and even disclosed her identity, Harishchandra explained to her that he needed the tax to accumulate sufficient money so that he can fulfill his promise to Vishwamitra before he dies, for otherwise he will die in ignominy and sin, the king told her to tear the Sari (the one-piece body wrapping cloth worn by Indian women) in lieu of the tax.

It was enough. The Lord caught hold of his hands, and told Vishwamitra that he will be severely punished if he exceeded limits. Vishwamitra was himself pleased by the king's truthfulness and adherence to his words, so he blessed the couple and the son was revived back to life. The king was given his kingdom back with due honour. This event is remembered in all the ancient texts and cited as examples of how one should suffer to uphold principles of Dharma (truthfulness, righteousness, honesty and propriety).

In Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 95 it is stated that "king Dadhichi and Harishchandra endured great suffering for the cause of upholding the principles of Dharma".]

झूमत द्वार अनेक मतंग जँजीर-जरे, मद अंबु चुचाते ।  
तीखे तुरंग मनोगति-चंचल, पौनके गौनहु तेँ बढि जाते ।।  
भीतर चंद्रमुखी अवलोकति, बाहर भूप खरे न समाते ।  
ऐसे भए तौ कहा, तुलसी, जो पै जानकीनाथके रंग न राते ।। 44 ।।

44. jhūmata dvāra anēka mataṅga jamṁjīra-jarē, mada ambu cucātē.  
tikhē turaṅga manōgati-cañcala, paunakē gaunahu tēm baḍhi jātē..  
bhītara candramukhī avalōkati, bāhara bhūpa kharē na samātē.  
aisē bha'ē tau kahā, tulasī, jō pai jānakīnāthakē raṅga na rātē..44..

Verse no. 7/44— [Tulsidas asserts that all the glories and worldly pomp are futile if one does not have devotion and love for Lord Ram so much so that he loses his independent identity and becomes one with the Lord.]

A person (such as an Emperor) may have numerous healthy and robust elephants tied with chains and swaying to and fro at the gates of his residence (palace), he may have a large number of horses who are as swift or even faster than the wind and the speed of mind available in the stable, there may be present a moon-faced (beautiful) wife in the household to look at, and outside his gates there may be a crowd of renowned kings of stature, who are so numerous that they could not be accommodated inside the court (and so spilled over outside), waiting for their turn to meet this person

(Emperor)—but Tulsidas says that inspite of such great and exceptionally good fortunes, pomp, pageantry, circumstance and fame, if one does not paint oneself in the colour of Sri Ram (i.e. if one does not totally identifies oneself with the Supreme Lord and extinguishes his independent existence and identity by total surrender to the Lord), then what is the good and the use of this show, pretension and drama of grandeur and majesty (as described above).

राज सुरेस पचासकको बिधिके करको जो पटो लिखि पाएँ।  
पूत सुपूत, पुनीत प्रिया, निज सुंदरताँ रतिको महु नाएँ॥  
संपति-सिद्धि सबै 'तुलसी' मनकी मनसा चितवै चितु लाएँ।  
जानकीजीवन जाने बिना जग ऐसेउ जीव न जीव कहाएँ॥45॥

45. rāja surēsa pacāśakakō bidhikē karakō jō paṭō likhi pā'ēm̃.  
pūta supūta, punīta priyā, nija suṁdaratām̃ ratikō madu nā'ēm̃..  
sāmpati-sid'dhi sabai 'tulasī' manakī manasā citavaim̃ citu lā'ēm̃.  
jānakījīvanu jānē binā jaga aisē'u jīva na jīva kahā'ēm̃..45..

Verse no. 7/45—One may possess the lease-deed written by the creator Brahma himself of fifty kingdoms as magnificent as those of Indra's, he may have sons who are very worthy, he may have a faithful wife who puts to shame the pride of Rati (the consort of Kamdeo) by her beauty, who has all the Riddhis and Siddhis (prosperity, wealth, achievements, acquisitions, possessions etc.) available in great abundance and in accordance to one's likings—but Tulsidas says that if one does not understand or recognise or know who Lord Sri Ram is, then he is not fit to be called a living being inspite of all the worldly glamour, grandeur and magnificent possessions he may have.

कृसगात ललात जो रोटिन को, घरवात घरें खुरपा-खरिया।  
तिन्ह सोनेके मेरु-से ढेर लहे, मनु तौ न भरो, घरु पै भरिया॥  
'तुलसी' दुखु दूनो दसा दुहुँ देखि, कियो मुखु दारिद को करिया।  
तजि आस भो दासु रघुपतिको, दसरत्थको दानि दया-दरिया॥46॥

46. kṛṣagāta lalāta jō rōṭina kō, gharavāta gharēm̃ khurapā-khariyā.  
tinha sōnēkē mēru-sē ḍhēra lahē, manu tau na bharō, gharu pai bhariyā..  
'tulasī' dukhu dūnō dasā duhum̃ dēkhi, kiyo mukhu dārida kō kariyā.  
taji āsa bhō dāsu raghuppatikō, dasarat'thakō dāni dayā-dariyā..46..

Verse no. 7/46—Those who are hungry and emaciated, and therefore roam hungrily for bread, and those whose entire wealth consists of a rope to tie a bundle of grass and a weeder—if they find a huge mountain of gold as large as Mt. Sumeru, they wouldn't be satisfied although that would be sufficient to fill their house (i.e. they can have all possible worldly possessions, but their greed for more won't abate).

Tulsidas says that he has observed (experienced and witnessed) greater poverty and wants in life when he had lost all hopes of redemption. But, when he became a devout devotee of Lord Ram, all his needs were taken care of by Lord Ram who is like a river of mercy and kindness.

[Here, Tulsidas emphasizes the need for satisfaction or contentedness in whatever one has, because greed, avarice, wistfulness and yearnings have no end. Then again he emphasizes the need to have devotion for the Lord because then it would be the

responsibility of the Lord to look after the well-being of his devotee and take care of his basic needs. Tulsidas affirms this fact out of his personal experience because earlier he had to seek the help of the world to sustain himself and meet his primary needs also, but once he took the refuge of Lord Ram all his worries melted away.]

को भरिहै हरिके रितएँ, रितवै पुनि को, हरि जौं भरिहै ।  
उथपै तेहि को, जेहि रामु थपै, थपिहै तेहि को, हरि जौं ठरिहै ॥  
तुलसी यहु जानि हिउँ अपनै सपनै नहिं कालहु तैं डरिहै ।  
कुमयाँ कछु हानि न औरनकी, जो पै जानकी-नाथु मया करिहै ॥ 47 ॥

47. kō bharihai harikē rita'ēm̐, ritavai puni kō, hari jaum̐ bharihai.  
uthapai tēhi kō, jēhi rāmu thapai, thapihai tēhi kō, hari jaum̐ ṭarihai..  
tulasī yahu jāni hi'ēm̐ apanēm̐ sapanēm̐ nahim̐ kālahu tēm̐ ḍarihai.  
kumayām̐ kachu hāni na auranakim̐, jō pai jānakī-nāthu mayā karihai..47..

Verse no. 7/47—When God has emptied anything, who can fill it, and vice-versa. If anyone is established by Lord Sri Ram, who can uproot him, and if anyone is uprooted by the Lord, then who has the power to establish him?

Recognising this fact, Tulsidas will never be afraid of Kaal (time, death, destiny) even in his dreams because if Lord Ram shows kindness and mercy towards him, then whatever others may think or do shall make no difference or in anyway cause any harm to him. [That is, Tulsidas believes that if Lord Ram is munificent and benevolent towards him then he is not at all bothered about the world, and nothing would affect him in the least.]

ब्याल कराल महाबिष, पावक मत्तगयंदहु के रद तोरे ।  
साँसति संकि चली, डरपे हुते किंकर, ते करनी मुख मोरे ॥  
नेकु बिषादु नहीं प्रह्लादहि कारन केहरिके बल हो रे ।  
कौनकी त्रास करै तुलसी जो पै राखिहै राम, तौ मारिहै को रे ॥ 48 ॥

48. byāla karāla mahābiśa, pāvaka mattagayandahu kē rada tōrē.  
sām̐ṣati saṅki calī, ḍarapē hutē kiṅkara, tē karanī mukha mōrē..  
nēku biśādu nahim̐ prahalādahi kārana kēharikē bala hō rē.  
kaunakī trāsa karai tulasī jō pai rākhihai rāma, tau mārihai kō rē..48..

Verse no. 7/48—(Referring to Prahalad, the child devotee of Lord Vishnu, Tulsidas says—) Ferocious and venomous snakes, terrible poisons, a blazing fire, and even the tusks of wild elephants got broken, but none of them could harm Prahalad. ‘Troubles’ became alarmed themselves and ran away from him. Even those obedient servants who were afraid of disobeying the king (Prahalad’s demon father) declined to carry out their duties (and obey him).

In spite of all the torments inflicted upon him, Prahalad did not worry and neither did he suffer from any pains and sorrows because he was dependent on and relying upon the strength of Lord Narsingh (the Man-Lion incarnation of Lord Vishnu who had intervened to protect Prahalad and kill his demon father who had been tormenting the child endlessly to force him to give up having love and devotion for Lord Vishnu).

Similarly, why should Tulsidas be afraid of anyone? If Lord Sri Ram protects him, who can kill or harm him?

[Note—A brief note on Prahalad is appended to verse no. 8 of this Chapter.]

कृपाँ जिनकी कछु काजु नहीं, न अकाजु कछू जिनकेँ मुखु मोरें।  
करैं तिनकी परवाहि ते, जो बिनु पूँछ-बिषान फिरैं दिन दोरें॥  
तुलसी जेहिके रघुनाथुसे नाथु, समर्थ सुसेवत रीझत थोरें।  
कहा भवभीर परी तेहि धौ, बिचरै धरनी तिनसौं तिनु तोरें॥49॥

49. krpām̐ jīnakīm kachu kāju nahīm, na akāju kachū jīnakēm mukhu mōrēm.  
karair̐ tinakī paravāhi tē, jō binu pūm̐cha-bīśāna phirair̐ dina daurēm..  
tulasī jēhikē raghunāthusē nāthu, samartha susēvata rījhata thōrēm.  
kahā bhavabhīra parī tēhi dhaur̐, bicarai dharanīm tinasōm tinu tōrēm..49..

Verse no. 7/49—Only those people who are like animals (i.e. they have no wisdom and a sense of dignity and self-respect) bother about, or try to appease others in the hope of help and support from them, though it actually does not matter if the latter are favourable towards them or opposed to them.

[It means that many people, though they are not animals, forget their true goal or purpose in life, and spend their time pursuing worldly objects, pleasures or simply worry about food and comfort of the sense organs. They would stoop to any level to fulfil these objectives. They try to please other people because they think that they could derive some benefit by such relationship.]

Tulsidas says that a person who relies on such a magnanimous and kind-hearted Lord such as Sri Ram—the Lord who is easy to please with even a small or a minor form of service and a little bit of devotion (i.e. not much effort is required to please Sri Ram)—has nothing to worry about in this world. Such a man snaps relations with those who try to please the world, and himself moves about in this world without any care. [He does not bother to please anyone else in this world because he has already pleased the Lord of the world known as Sri Ram.]

कानन, भूधर, बारि, बयारि, महाबिषु, ब्याधि, दवा-अरि घेरे।  
संकट कोटि जहाँ 'तुलसी', सुत, मातु, पिता, हित, बंधु न नेरे॥  
राखिहैं रामु कृपालु तहाँ, हनुमान-से सेवक हैं जेहि करे।  
नाक, रसातल, भूतलमें रघुनायकु एकु सहायकु मेरे॥50॥

50. kānana, bhūdhara, bāri, bayāri, mahābīśu, byādhi, davā-ari ghērē.  
saṅkaṭa kōṭi jahām̐ tulasī, suta, mātu, pitā, hita, bandhu na nērē..  
rākhihair̐ rāmu krpālu tahām̐, hanumāna-sē sēvaka hair̐ jēhi kērē.  
nāka, rasātala, bhūtalamēm̐ raghunāyaku ēku sahāyaku mērē..50..

Verse no. 7/50—A person may face unpredictable circumstances at unpredictable places that cause him a lot of misery and pain. Adversities may confront him anywhere in life—it may be in a forest, on the mountain, in water (as when taking a bath in a river when his legs slips and he is drowned), during a storm, in the form of mistakenly eating or drinking a potent poison, in the form of various diseases, in the form of a ravaging fire that burns down everything that he possesses, in the form of being surrounded by enemies, and in numerous other ways in which troubles and misfortunes may grasp a man in his life.

He may find himself all alone to face these adversities, misfortunes, miseries and troubles with none of his worldly relations such as his parents, his brothers, his



friends, his sons or his other relatives and kin being present there to help him—Tulsidas reassures such a man who finds himself trapped alone and overcome by terror that even in such dire straits and adverse circumstances, the merciful Lord Ram, who has a powerful helper such as Hanuman, is there to protect you, and he will protect you.

Tulsidas asserts that a man must have firm faith in the Lord and be convinced that ‘Sri Ram is my only protector and helper in the three worlds consisting of the land (earth), air (sky) and the subterranean. [And therefore, I have nothing to worry about and fear from.]’

जबै जमराज-रजायसतें मोहि लै चलिहैं भट बाँधि नटैया ।  
तातु न मातु, न स्वामि-सखा, सुत-बंधु बिसाल बिपत्ति-बटैया ।।  
साँसति घोर, पुकारत आरत कौन सुनै, चहुँ ओर डटैया ।  
एकु कृपाल तहाँ ‘तुलसी’ दसरत्थको नंदनु बंदि-कटैया ।।51।।

51. jabai jamarāja-rajāyasatēm mōhi lai calihaiṁ bhaṭa bām̐dhi naṭaiyā.  
tātu na mātu, na svāmi-sakhā, suta-bandhu bisāla bipatti-bam̐ṭaiyā..  
sām̐sati ghōra, pukārata ārata kauna sunai, cahum̐ ōra ḍaṭaiyā.  
ēku krpāla tahām̐ ‘tulasī’ dasarat’thakō nandanu bandi-kaṭaiyā..51..

Verse no. 7/51—When the messengers of Yam (God of Death and Hell) shall tie a knot around my neck and take (drag) me away on his orders, there will be no father, mother, lord, friend, son or brother to share my troubles, torments and fate. I’ll be alone to face and bear that horrible torture and suffering. Who would listen to my wails and cries of distress at that time? I would be surrounded by wrathful, admonishing and scowling messengers of death.

Tulsidas says that at that moment there will be only one—the merciful son of Dasrath, Lord Sri Ram—to break my shackles, and provide me liberation from my sufferings.

जहाँ जमजातना, घोर नदी, भट कोटि जलच्चर दंत टेवैया ।  
जहँ धार भयंकर, वार न पार, न बोहितु नाव, न नीक खेवैया ।।  
‘तुलसी’ जहँ मातु-पिता न सखा, नहिँ कोउ कहूँ अवलंब देवैया ।  
तहाँ बिनु कारन रामु कृपाल बिसाल भुजा गहि काढ़ि लेवैया ।।52।।

52. jahām̐ jamajātanā, ghōra nadī, bhaṭa kōṭi jalaccara danta ṭevaiyā.  
jaham̐ dhāra bhayaṅkara, vāra na pāra, na bōhitu nāva, na nīka khēvaiyā..  
‘tulasī’ jaham̐ mātu-pitā na sakhā, nahim̐ kō’u kahūm̐ avalamba dēvaiyā.  
tahām̐ binu kārana rāmu krpāla bisāla bhujā gahi kāḍhi lēvaiyā..52..

Verse no. 7/52—(Describing the horrors of the Vaitarni River, literally the river which drowns, that flows in hell, Tulsidas says)—‘In the Vaitarni River there are numerous tormenting and ferocious messengers of death represented by sharp-toothed aquatic creatures (such as crocodiles etc.). It is a deep river with very swift currents which sweeps a man away. There are neither ships and boats, nor boatmen to help one cross it. No one is there to help the lonely traveler; there are no parents, friends and other kin to give any kind of support.

Tulsidas says that in such a predicament and precarious situation, one has only Lord Ram to rely upon and seek help from. ‘The Lord who shows mercy and kindness

without cause (i.e. without expecting anything in return), and who can extend his long arms to pick you up from drowning, will be there to save you from the horrors of the Vaitarni River.'

[Note—The 'Vaitarni River' is a deep, rapidly swirling and turbulent river that is one of the last formidable barriers that stands in the way of the creature reaching heaven.]

जहाँ हित स्वामि, न संग सखा, बनिता, सुत, बंधु, न बापु, न मैया ।  
काय-गिरा-मनके जनके अपराध सबै छलु छड़ि छमैया ॥  
तुलसी ! तेहि काल कृपाल बिना दूजो कौन है दारुन दुःख दमैया ॥  
जहाँ सब संकट, दुर्घट सोचु, तहाँ मेरो साहेबु राखै रमैया ॥53॥

53. jahām̐ hita svāmi, na saṅga sakhā, banitā, suta, bandhu, na bāpu, na maiyā.  
kāya-girā-manakē janakē aparādha sabai chalu chāḍi chamaiyā..  
tulasī! tēhi kāla kṛpāla binā dūjō kauna hai dārūna duḥkha damaiyā..  
jahām̐ saba saṅkaṭa, durghaṭa sōcu, tahām̐ mērō sāhēbu rākhai ramaiyā..53..

Verse no. 7/53—(Describing the lonely soul in this world, Tulsidas says—) 'Where there is no Lord to help (and provide solace and succour), and neither is there a friend, wife, son, brother, parents etc. to lend support—in such a lonely world, who is there to help a creature except Sri Ram, the merciful and gracious Lord who sincerely excuses all the sins of his servants (devotees), whether these sins are done by their bodies, their minds or their speech, and who also destroys all the horrors and sorrows of his devotees?

In this world so full of horrible troubles and worries, there is only Sri Ram to protect me.' [Tulsidas avers that Lord Ram is the only true friend and companion in this otherwise lonely world.]

तापसको बरदायक देव सबै पुनि बैरु बड़ावत बाढ़ें ।  
थोरेंहि कोपु, कृपा पुनि थोरेंहि, बैठि कै जोरत, तोरत ठाढ़ें ॥  
लौंकि-बजाइ लखें गजराज, कहाँ लौं कहौं केहि सों रद काढ़ें ।  
आरतके हित नाथु अनाथके रामु सहाय सही दिन गाढ़ें ॥54॥

54. tāpasakō baradāyaka dēva sabai puni bairu baṛhāvata bāṛhēm̐.  
thōrēnhi kōpu, kṛpā puni thōrēnhi, baiṭhi kai jōrata, tōrata ṭhāṛhēm̐..  
ṭhōnki-bajā'i lakhēm̐ gajarāja, kahām̐ laum̐ kahaum̐ kēhi sōm̐ rada kāṛhēm̐.  
āratakē hita nāthu anāthakē rāmu sahāya sahī dina gāṛhēm̐..54..

Verse no. 7/54—(Asserting that all in this world are selfish except Lord Ram, Tulsidas says—) 'The Gods give boons to ascetics and hermits, but when they rise in divinity and spiritualism, the same Gods become jealous and opposed to them. They are easily pleased and equally easily antagonized. They make friendship while sitting, and break it on standing (i.e. their friendship is temporary and short-lived).

Whom should I go telling these things, and how much should I say! [That is, what is the use of repeating this thing often.]

The Gaja (the elephant)<sup>1</sup> had tested all thoroughly. He had concluded that Lord Ram is the only true friend of the distressed, Lord of the destitute, and a real and true helper in the days of trouble.' [When the elephant was being pulled in the water by the alligator, he had appealed to all his companions as well as the Gods to save him. But

to no avail. When it was certain that he would drown, he finally turned his attention to Lord Vishnu and offered his worship to him by offering the Lord one last lotus. The merciful Lord wasted no time in saving him and killing his tormentor, the alligator.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Gaja/Gajendra, the Elephant—See Uttar Kand, note of verse no. 7 herein below.]

जप, जोग, बिराग, महामख-साधन, दान, दया, दम कोटि करै।  
मुनि-सिद्ध, सुरेसु, गनेसु, महेसु-से सेवत जन्म अनेक मरै॥  
निगमागम-ग्यान, पुरान पढ़ै, तपसानलमें जुगपुंज जरै।  
मनसों पनु रोपि कहै तुलसी, रघुनाथ बिना दुख कौन हरै॥55॥

55. japa, jōga, birāga, mahāmakha-sādhana, dāna, dayā, dama kōṭi karai.  
muni-sid'dha, surēsu, ganēsu, mahēsu-sē sēvata janma anēka marai..  
nigamāgama-gyāna, purāna paṛhai, tapasānalamēm jugapumja jarai.  
manasōm panu rōpi kahai tulasī, raghunātha binā dukha kauna harai..55..

Verse no. 7/55—Whether one practices numerous ways to remove one's troubles and sorrows—such as doing Japa (constant reciting of the Lord's holy name), Yoga (meditation), Vairagya (renunciation), Yagya (large fire-sacrifices), Daan (making charity), Daya (acts of kindness), Dam (control of the sense organs), etc.; or he may die after having served sages, mystics, Indra, Ganesh, Shiva and other such Gods continuously in many births; or he studies and learns the essence of the Vedas and other holy scriptures such as the Purans; or he burns himself in the fire of sacrifices, penances and austerities for many ages and many generations—but Tulsidas asserts with a determined mind that no one can eliminate sorrows and troubles except Lord Ram.

[That is, it is only when a person develops devotion and love for the Lord and asks him for liberation and deliverance from his troubles that he actually gets it. All other means of seeking peace and happiness of the soul are futile.]

पातक-पीन, कुदारिद-दीन मलीन धरै कथरी-करवा है।  
लोकु कहै, बिधिहूँ न लिख्यो सपनेहूँ नहीं अपने बर बाहै॥  
रामको किंकरु सो तुलसी, समुझैहि भलो, कहिबो न रवा है।  
ऐसेको ऐसो भयो कबहूँ न भजे बिनु बानरके चरवाहै॥56॥

56. pātaka-pīna, kudārīda-dīna malīna dharaiṁ katharī-karavā hai.  
lōku kahai, bidhihūṁ na likhyō sapanēhum nahīṁ apanē bara bāhai..  
rāmakō kiṅkaru sō tulasī, samujhēhi bhalō, kahibō na ravā hai.  
aisēkō aisō bhayō kabahūṁ na bhajē binu bānarakē caravāhai..56..

Verse no. 7/56—The people used to say (about Tulsidas) that he is very sinful, wretched and unfortunate due to his extreme poverty, and he wears dirty and tattered clothes (such as a towel around his waist and another around the shoulder). The creator did not write anything worth-while in his destiny, and he could not support himself even in his dreams. But today the same unfortunate Tulsidas has become a humble servant of Sri Ram. It is good and proper to understand this (because otherwise he would sound boastful). He has now been transformed from a low, wretched and sinful state of existence to such an exalted one without worshipping the 'shepherd of the monkeys' (Sri Ram).

[Note- Tulsidas talks about himself, but as a third person, so that he does not appear to be boasting. Lord Ram is called the 'shepherd of the monkeys' because like a shepherd who guides his flock of sheep and takes care of them, the Lord too directed the army of monkeys and took great care of them and their welfare. If the term 'monkey' is to be used as a metaphor for the humble, the lowly and the meek, this phrase would mean that the Lord takes up the moral responsibility of taking care of them.]

मातु-पिताँ जग जाइ तज्यो बिधिहूँ न लिखी कछु भाल भलाई ।  
नीच, निरादरभाजन, कादर, कूकर-टूकन लागि ललाई ।।  
रामु-सुभाउ सुन्यो तुलसी प्रभुसों कह्यो बारक पेदु खलाई ।  
स्वास्थ्यको परमाथको रघुनाथु सो साहेबु, खोरि न लाई ।।57 ।।

57. mātu-pitām̐ jaga jā'i tājyō bidhihūṁ na likhī kachu bhāla bhalā'ī.  
nīca, nirādarabhājana, kādara, kūkara-ṭūkana lāgi lalā'ī..  
rāmu-subhā'u sun'yō tulasīm̐ prabhusōṁ kahyō bāraka pēṭu khalā'ī.  
svārathakō paramārathakō raghunāthu sō sāhēbu, khōri na lā'ī..57..

Verse no. 7/57—The parents (mother and father— mātu-pitām̐) had abandoned him (Tulsidas) after birth, and even Brahma (the creator) had not destined any good for him. When that wretched Tulsidas, who was worthy of contempt and insults, who was a coward and so hungry that he greedily looked at the morsels of food thrown to stray dogs, heard of the merciful and benevolent nature of Lord Ram, he narrated all his agonies and sorrowful states to him (Sri Ram) with an open heart. Then the Lord left no stone unturned to improve his worldly and spiritual well-being, and took proper care of him.

पाप हरे, परिताप हरे, तनु पूजि भो हीतल सीतलताई ।  
हंसु कियो बकर्ते, बलि जाऊँ, कहाँ लौं कहौं करुना-अधिकाई ।।  
कालु बिलोकि कहै तुलसी, मनमें प्रभुकी परतीति अघाई ।  
जन्मु जहाँ, तहँ रावरे सों निबहै भरि देह सनेह-सगाई ।।58 ।।

58. pāpa harē, paritāpa harē, tanu pūji bhō hītala sītalatā'ī.  
hansu kiyō bakatēm̐, bali jā'um̐, kahām̐ laum̐ kahaum̐ karunā-adhikā'ī..  
kālu bilōki kahai tulasī, manamēm̐ prabhukī paratīti aghā'ī.  
janmu jahām̐, taham̐ rāvarē sōṁ nibahai bhari dēha sanēha-sagā'ī..58..

Verse no. 7/58—Tulsidas says— 'Oh Sri Ram! You have destroyed my sins, eliminated all the troubles, made my body worthy of respect, and made my mind peaceful and calm. Oh Lord, I thank you so much that you have converted (transformed) me from a stork (scheming, deceitful, cunning and contemptible person) into a swan (someone who is wise, enlightened and praise-worthy). How much can I describe your kindness and mercy?'

Now Tulsidas says that according to present circumstances, he has complete reliance and faith upon Sri Ram. Hence, 'Wherever I am born, let me be devoted and faithful to you as long as I keep that body.' [This last sentence shows that, probably, Tulsidas is very old and talking about his impending death.]

लोग कहैं, अरु हौंहु कहौं, जनु खोटो-खरो रघुनायकहीको ।

रावरी राम! बड़ी लघुता, जसु मेरो भयो सुखदायकहीको ।।  
 कै यह हानि सहौ, बलि जाउँ कि मोहू करौ निज लायकहीको ।  
 आनि हिउँ हित जानि करौ, ज्यौं हौं ध्यानु धरौं धनु-सायकहीको ।।59 ।।

59. lōga kahaim, aru haunhu kahaum, janu khōṭō-kharō raghunāyakahikō.  
 rāvarī rāma! baṛī laghutā, jasu mērō bhayō sukhadāyakahikō..  
 kai yaha hāni sahau, bali jā'um' ki mōhū karau nija lāyakahikō.  
 āni hi'ēm' hita jāni karau, jyōm haurm dhyānu dharaum dhanu-sāyakahikō..59..

Verse no. 7/59—'People say, and even I say, that whether I am good or bad, I still am always a humble servant of Lord Sri Ram. Oh Ram! This may belittle (undermine) your exalted stature (that a wretch like me is found near you), but the fame I got at being a servant of a great Lord like you gives immense peace and happiness to my heart.

I swear by you (or I sacrifice myself on you) that now either you bear with this loss of face (or humiliation of being called a Lord of this wretched fellow like me), or else make me worthy to serve you (i.e. purify me). Consider this in your heart, and thinking that it is good for me, please do it in a way that I can always remember your divine vision, your divine form that holds a bow and arrow (i.e. I may remember nothing else except you).'

आपु हौं आपुको नीकें कै जानत, रावरो राम! भरायो-गढ़ायो ।  
 कीरु ज्यौं नामु रटै तुलसी, सो कहै जगु जानकीनाथ पढ़ायो ।।  
 सोई है खेदु, जो बेदु कहै, न घटै जनु जो रघुबीर बढ़ायो ।  
 हौं तौ सदा खरको असवार, तिहारोइ नामु गयंद चढ़ायो ।।60 ।।

60. āpu haurm āpukō nīkēm kai jānata, rāvarō rāma! bharāyō-garhāyō.  
 kīru jyaurm nāmu raṭai tulasī, sō kahai jagu jānakīnātha paṛhāyō..  
 sōī hai khēdu, jō bēdu kahai, na ghaṭai janu jō raghubīra baṛhāyō.  
 haurm tau sadā kharakō asavāra, tihārō'i nāmu gayanda caṛhāyō..60..

Verse no. 7/60—'I know myself well. Oh Sri Ram! I have been created, sustained and developed by you. This Tulsidas repeats your name like a parrot, but the world says that he has been taught (tutored) by you. This is what I regret. [People think that I have attained enlightenment because I chant your name, fully understanding its meaning and essence. On the contrary, I repeat it like an ignorant parrot, which is a bird. If asked, I wouldn't be able to explain its significance. People would then think that my Guru Sri Ram is not competent enough. This is what I regret.]

But the Vedas say that a person who has been made to rise by Lord Ram can never fall. I was worthy of nothing but mounting a donkey (a derogatory term indicating that he had always been most hated and despised by the people), but it is only your (Lord Ram's) name that has made me mount an elephant (like a king—i.e. you have given me so much fame, which probably I don't deserve!).'

छारतें सँवारि कै पहारहू तें भारी कियो,  
 गारो भयो पंचमें पुनीत पच्छु पाइ कै ।

हैं तो जैसो तब तैसो अब अधमाई कै कै,  
 पेदु भरौं, राम! रावरोई गुनु गाइकै।।  
 आपने निवाजेकी पै कीजै लाज, महाराज!  
 मेरी ओर हेरि कै न बैठिए रिसाइ कै।  
 पालिकै कृपाल! ब्याल-बालको न मारिए,  
 औ काटिए न नाथ! बिषहूको रुखु लाइ कै।।61।।

61. chāratēm samvāri kai pahārahū tēm bhārī kiyō,  
 gārō bhayō pañcamēm punīta pacchu pā'i kai.  
 hauṁ tō jaisō taba taisō aba adhamā'i kai kai,  
 pēṭu bharaum, rāma! rāvarō'i gunu gā'ikai..  
 āpanē nivājēkī pai kijai lāja, mahārāja!  
 mēri ōra hēri kai na baiṭhi'ē risā'i kai.  
 pālikai krpāla! byāla-bālakō na māri'ē,  
 au kāṭi'ē na nātha! biśahūkō rukhu lā'i kai..61..

Verse no. 7/61—You have made me, who was humble and inconsequential like a particle of dust, into someone who is greater than a mountain by caring for me, and having received your favour, I have become the senior most among the 'Panchas' (literally, the 5-noble ones). As far as I am concerned, I am as sinful as I had been earlier. But oh Lord! Think of your reputation of being graceful, kind and merciful, and do not look at me with anger.

Oh the kind-and-merciful-one! One should not kill a serpent's young one after rearing it, nor should one cut a poison-tree after planting and watering it. [Tulsidas means that though he is very sinful and useless, but since Sri Ram had looked after him since birth, he should not abandon him now.]

बेद न पुरान-गानु, जानौ न बिग्यानु ग्यानु,  
 ध्यान - धारना - समाधि - साधन - प्रबीनता।  
 नाहिन बिरागु, जोग, जाग भाग तुलसी कै,  
 दया-दान दूबरो हौं, पापही की पीनता।।  
 लोभ-मोह-काम-कोह-दोस-कोसु-मोसो कौन ?  
 कलिहूँ जो सीखि लई मेरियै मलीनता।  
 एकु ही भरोसो राम! रावरो कहावत हौं,  
 रावरे दयालु दीनबंधु! मेरी दीनता।।62।।

62. bēda na purāna-gānu, jānaum na bigyānu gyānu,  
 dhyāna - dhāranā - samādhi - sādhana - prabīnatā.  
 nāhina birāgu, jōga, jāga bhāga tulasī kēm,  
 dayā-dāna dūbarō hauṁ, pāpahī kī pīnatā..  
 lōbha-mōha-kāma-kōha-dōsa-kōsu-mōsō kauna?  
 kalihūm'jō sikhī la'i mēriyai malīnatā.  
 ēku hī bharōsō rāma! rāvarō kahāvata hauṁ,  
 rāvarē dayālu dīnabandhu! mēri dīnatā..62..

Verse no. 7/62—'I do not know how to recite the Vedas and the Purans, nor am aware of their wisdom and science (metaphysics), and I am not an expert in doing Dhyān (concentration), Dharna (belief, conviction and faith), Samadhi (deep meditation) and

Sadhna (other means of spiritual pursuit). There is no Vairagya (renunciation), Yoga (meditative exercises) and doing Yagya (fire sacrifices and other rituals) in the destiny of Tulsidas. I am lean in doing charity and having mercy, but robust in committing sins.

Who else is a treasury of such negative traits as Lobha (greed, rapacity, avarice), Moha (attachments, delusions), Kaam (passions, desires and lust) and Krodh (anger) like me?

It appears that Kaliyug (the present era which is considered to be most corrupt, sinful and full of negativity) has learnt all his dark and demeaning qualities from me. Yes, I have only one hope (of salvation), and that is, 'I call myself yours (Lord Ram's).' You (Sri Ram) are a friend of the wretched, the downtrodden and the distressed. You are full of kindness, and I am extremely humble (so, live up to your reputation, and protect and save me!).'

रावरो कहावौ, गुनु गावौ राम! रावरोड़,  
रोटी द्वै हौ पावौ राम! रावरी ही कानि हौ।  
जानत जहानु, मन मेरेहूँ गुमानु बड़ो,  
मान्यो मैं न दूसरो, न मानत, न मानिहौं।।  
पाँचकी प्रतीति न भरोसो मोहि आपनोई,  
तुम्ह अपनायो हौ तबै ही परि जानिहौं।  
गढ़ि-गुढ़ि छोलि-छालि कुंदकी-सी भाई बातें  
जैसी मुख कहौं, तैसी जीयँ जब आनिहौं।।63।।

63. rāvarō kahāvaum, gunu gāvaum rāma! rāvarō'i,  
rōṭī dvai haur̥m pāvaum rāma! rāvarī hīr̥m kāni haur̥m.  
jānata jahānu, mana mērēhūm̐ gumānu barō,  
mān'yō mair̥m na dūsarō, na mānata, na mānihaur̥m..  
pām̐cakī pratīti na bharōsō mōhi āpanō'ī,  
tumha apanāyō haur̥m tabai hīr̥m pari jānihaur̥m.  
gaḍhi-guḍhi chōli-chālī kuṇḍakī-sī bhā'īr̥m bātair̥m  
jaisī mukha kahaur̥m, taisī jīyam̐ jaba ānihaur̥m..63..

Verse no. 7/63—'Oh Lord Ram! I am called yours and I sing your praises and glories, and oh Lord, it is because of you that I get two rotis (breads) to eat. The world knows and I am also proud of the fact that I recognise no one else except you—hadn't till date, and shall never in future.

I have no belief in the 'Panchas' (the 5-noble men; or a jury of 5 eminent persons), and neither do I rely on myself. [Tulsidas means that he is so stupid that he would not believe what other noble men say, and he is also uncertain of himself. He would not do anything advised by learned men that would lead to his welfare, both worldly and spiritual, and he is also uncertain that whatever he does is actually good for him. In spite of that he is certain of only one thing—and it is that he knows no other means of succour and solace except submitting before Lord Ram, and having love and devotion for him. This is enough for Tulsidas.]

I speak pleasant, appeasing, flattering and sweet things (words) as if they were moulded properly, smoothened and given shape on a lathe machine. When I am able to bring such refinement and smoothness to my heart, instead of just in my external speech, then I shall consider that you have truly accepted me.' [Tulsidas lays emphasis here on purity of heart that must accompany external good behaviour.]

बचन, बिकारु, करतबउ खुआर, मनु  
 बिगत-बिचार, कलिमलको निधानु है।  
 रामको कहाइ, नामु बेचि-बेचि, खाइ सेवा-  
 संगति न जाइ, पाछिलेको उपखानु है।।  
 तेहू तुलसीको लोग भलो-भलो कहै, ताको  
 दूसरो न हेतु, एकु नीकें कै निदानु है।  
 लोकरीति बिदित बिलोकिअत जहाँ-तहाँ,  
 स्वामीकें सनेहँ स्वानहू को सनमानु है।।64।।

64. bacana, bikāru, karataba'u khu'āra, manu  
 bigata-bicāra, kalimalakō nidhānu hai.  
 rāmakō kahā'i, nāmu bēci-bēci, khā'i sēvā-  
 saṅgati na jā'i, pāchilēkō upakhānu hai..  
 tēhū tulasīkō lōga bhalō-bhalō kahai, tākō  
 dūsarō na hētu, ēku nīkēm kai nidānu hai.  
 lōkarīti bidita bilōki'ata jahām'tahām',  
 svāmīkēm sanēham' svānahū kō sanamānu hai..64..

Verse no. 7/64—Tulsidas says that he has a corrupted speech, his deeds are bad (evil), and his mind is devoid of wisdom and is a treasury of all the vices. He calls himself as one who belongs (is devoted) to Sri Ram, but sells (employs) the Lord's holy Name to feed himself. He has never done any selfish service, nor kept good company of saints.

[That is, Tulsidas says that he is so selfish and despicable that he uses the holy Name of the Lord for such mundane things as seeking food to fill his stomach. People give him alms and show respect to him because he says the Lord's holy Name, but he says it only for such worldly gains and not for his spiritual welfare.]

It's a great wonder that even such a sinful and wretched person as Tulsidas is called 'good' by the people. There is no other reason for it except one. It is a well known social fact and observed everywhere that a dog that is loved by its master gets respect at all the places.

[That is, just like a dog who is loved by a great man such as a king or a noble man is also shown love by other people if only to please the master from whom they expect any favour, the humble and lowly Tulsidas is shown so much respect by the world just because he is a devotee of Lord Ram, and not because he had any worthwhile qualities inherent in him.]

The idea in this verse is simple. Tulsidas says that he has no good qualities in him that is of any worth, but the simple fact that he has submitted himself to Lord Ram and calls himself the Lord's humble servant or follower is enough to have elevated him to an exalted stature befitting that of a saint. This is glory of the Lord and his holy Name that even such lowly and useless creatures as Tulsidas acquire such great fame and acclaim simply by relying upon the name of the Lord, simply by calling themselves the servant of the Lord. Ever since the Lord has accepted him as his own servant or devotee, he has become so saintly, revered and an exalted one that he is respected everywhere. This verse shows Tulsidas' humility.]

### Faith in Rām's holy name

स्वास्थ्यको साजु न समाजु परमास्थको,



मोसो दगाबाज दूसरो न जगजाल है ।  
 कै न आयो, करौ न करौंगो करतूति भली,  
 लिखी न बिरंचिहूँ भलाई भूलि भाल है ।।  
 रावरी सपथ, रामनाम ही की गति मेरे,  
 इहाँ झूठे, झूठे सो तिलोक तिहूँ काल है ।  
 तुलसी को भलो पै तुम्हारें ही किए कृपाल,  
 कीजै न बिलंबु बलि, पानीभरी खाल है ।।65 ।।

65. svārathakō sāju na samāju paramārathakō,  
 mōsō dagābāja dūsarō na jagajāla hai.  
 kai na āyōm, karauṁ na karauṅgō karatūti bhalī,  
 likhī na biran̄cihūṁ bhalā'ī bhūli bhāla hai..  
 rāvarī sapatha, rāmanāma hī kī gati mērēm,  
 ihām̃ jhūṭhō, jhūṭhō sō tilōka tihūṁ kāla hai.  
 tulasī kō bhalō pai tumhārēm hī ki'ēm̃ krpāla,  
 kījai na bilambu bali, pānībharī khāla hai..65..

Verse no. 7/65—Tulsidas says, 'I do not possess anything to serve my interests or anything that would help in my salvation. There is no other cheat and deceitful person like me in this world. I have neither done, nor do, or shall do any good deed, even Brahma the creator had not, by oversight, destined any good for me. I swear by you, and I say truthfully oh Lord Ram that I have your name as my only hope, as my only succour and solace. If I speak a lie to you then I am a greatest liar in the three Lokas (heaven, earth, subterranean) and the three periods of time (past, present, future).'

Tulsidas says that his betterment and welfare can only be done by Lord Ram himself, so he requests the Lord not to delay further because his condition is akin to a water-filled bag made of hide. [Even as water-filled bag made of hide decays soon, so is the fate of Tulsidas. He has become old, and not much time is left. So he urges his Lord to hurry-up and waste no time in ensuring Tulsidas' emancipation and salvation.]

रागको न साजु, न बिरागु, जोग जाग जिखँ  
 काया नहिं छाड़ि देत ठाटिबो कुठाटको ।  
 मनोराजु करत अकाजु भयो आजु लगि,  
 चाहे चारु चीर, पै लहै न दूकु टाटको ।।  
 भयो करतारु बड़े कूरको कृपालु, पायो  
 नामप्रेमु-पारसु, हौं लालची बराटको ।  
 'तुलसी' बनी है राम ! रावरें बनाएँ, ना तो  
 धोबी-कैसो कूकरु न घरको, न घाटको ।।66 ।।

66. rāgakō na sāju, na birāgu, jōga jāga jiyam̃  
 kāyā nahim̃ chāḍi dēta ṭhāṭibō kuṭhāṭakō.  
 manōrāju karata akāju bhayō āju lagi,  
 cāhē cāru cīra, pai lahai na ṭūku ṭāṭakō..  
 bhayō karatāru baṛē kūrakō krpālu, pāyō  
 nāmaprēmu-pārasu, hauṁ lālacī barāṭakō.  
 'tulasī' banī hai rāma! rāvarēm̃ banā'ēm̃, nā tō  
 dhōbī-kaisō kūkaru na gharakō, na ghāṭakō..66..

Verse no. 7/66—'I do not possess material comforts that would satisfy the sense organs of my body, nor do I have the eclectic virtue of renunciation or detachment (that would make me feel contented with whatever I have). I do not do Yoga (meditation) and neither do I have the benefit of performing Vedic rituals. This body of mine does not want to abandon (abstain from) bad deeds. Indulgences have created only losses and wants for me till now. The body wants to acquire and wear good clothes, but does not even get torn and tattered rags!

Oh merciful Lord! You had shown mercy even on this scoundrel. A cheap, mean and greedy man like me has laid his hands on your Holy Name which is like Paaras (a stone which converts iron into gold on touch). [Just like a greedy man would grab such a Paaras stone as the panacea for all his misfortunes, Tulsidas has grabbed and clung to your holy Name as the only solution to all his problems.]

Oh Lord Ram! All this is due to you (i.e. whatever peace, happiness, respect and comfort I have is due to your mercy and the benevolence of your holy Name). Otherwise, like a washer-man's donkey, I was neither here nor there. [I could not possibly have imagined that I will get whatever good I have if it would not have been for you.]'

ऊँचो मनु, ऊँची रुचि, भागु नीचो निपट ही,  
लोकरीति-लायक न, लंगर लबारु है।  
स्वारथु अगमु परमारथकी कहा चली,  
पेटकी कठिन जगु जीवको जवारु है।।  
चाकरी न आकरी, न खेती, न बनिज-भीख,  
जानत न कूर कछु किसब कबारु है।  
तुलसीकी बाजी राखी रामहीके नाम, न तु  
भेंट पितरन को न मूड़हू में बारु है।।67।।

67. ūm̐cō manu, ūm̐cī ruci, bhāgu nīcō nipaṭa hī,  
lōkarīti-lāyaka na, laṅgara labāru hai.  
svārathu agamu paramārathakī kahā calī,  
pēṭakīm kaṭhina jagu jīvakō javāru hai..  
cākarī na ākarī, na khētī, na baniya-bhīkha,  
jānata na kūra kachu kisaba kabāru hai.  
tulasīkī bājī rākhī rāmahīkēm nāma, na tu  
bhēṇṭa pitarana kō na mūṛahū mēm bāru hai..67..

Verse no. 7/67—His (Tulsidas') desires are high and inclinations are also great, but he has a very poor luck. He is not fit for society (does not know proper social behaviour and how to please the people). He very mischievous and a big-mouthed blarney (chatter-box)!

For him (Tulsidas), even serving and providing for himself is difficult—what to talk of helping others. His hunger has made the world (life and existence) very burdensome for him. He has no steady occupation and a livelihood to help him feed himself—for he does not serve anyone permanently (on a salary basis; he is unemployed), he is neither a miner (digs for gold or other precious materials), nor does he possess a field (i.e. he is not a farmer), nor is he a merchant, nor a beggar, nor knows any other kind of business or vocation.

Tulsidas' only bet is on Sri Ram's holy Name. Otherwise he is so poor and wretched that he has not a single hair on his head to offer to his dead ancestors. [That

is, he is abjectly poor, except possessing the gem in the form of Lord Ram's holy Name! Therefore he has no worry whatsoever.]

अपत-उतार, अपकारको अगारु, जग  
जाकी छाँह छुएँ सहमत ब्याध-बाधको ।  
पातक-पुहुमि पालिबेको सहसाननु सो,  
काननु कपटको, पयोधि अपराधको ।।  
तुलसी-से बामको भो दाहिनो दयानिधानु,  
सुनत सिहात सब सिद्ध, साधु साधको ।  
रामनाम ललित-ललामु कियो लाखनिको,  
बड़ो कूर कायर कपूत-कौड़ी आधको ।।68 ।।

68. apata-utāra, apakārakō agāru, jaga  
jākī chām̐ha chu'ēm̐ sahamata byādha-bāghakō.  
pātaka-puhumi pālibēkō sahasānanu sō,  
kānanu kapaṭakō, payōdhi aparādhakō..  
tulasī-sē bāmakō bhō dāhinō dayānidhānu,  
sunata sihāta saba sid'dha, sādhu sādhakō.  
rāmanāma lalita-lalāmu kiyō lākhanikō,  
baṛō kūra kāyara kapūta-kaurī ādhakō..68..

Verse no. 7/68—This wretched (Tulsidas) is so shameless and ungrateful that his evil shadow is sufficient to instil fear even among the animals who are cruel and merciless.

He (Tulsidas) is like a hundred hooded serpent (Sesh Nath) as far as bearing the burden of sins like this serpent who bears the burden of earth on its hood. He is like a forest of deceit and an ocean of errors and faults.

'Lord Ram has become benign and merciful on the mean, unwise and vain Tulsidas'—on hearing this, all the wise-ones, the saintly and holy-ones, and the spiritual seekers begin to praise Tulsidas (for his astounding good luck). Lord Ram's holy and divine Name has converted a man who is worthless, wretched, coward and deceitful, and a most unworthy son of his parents, into a person who is as worthy and valuable as a beautiful gem worth millions.

सब अंग हीन, सब साधन बिहीन मन-  
बचन मलीन, हीन कुल करतूति हौं ।  
बुधि-बल-हीन, भाव-भगति-बिहीन, हीन  
गुन, ग्यानहीन, हीन भाग हूँ बिभूति हौं ।।  
तुलसी गरीब की गई-बहोर रामनामु,  
जाहि जपि जीहँ रामहू को बैठे धूति हौं ।  
प्रीति रामनामसों प्रतीति रामनामकी,  
प्रसाद रामनामकें पसारि पाय सूतिहौं ।।69 ।।

69. saba aṅga hīna, saba sādhana bihīna mana-  
bacana malīna, hīna kula karatūti haum̐.  
budhi-bala-hīna, bhāva-bhagati-bihīna, hīna  
guna, gyānahīna, hīna bhāga hūm̐ bibhūti haum̐..  
tulasī garība kī ga'ī-bahōra rāmanāmu,  
jāhi japi jīham̐ rāmahū kō baiṭhō dhūti haum̐.

prīti rāmanāmasōm pratīti rāmanāmakī,  
prasāda rāmanāmakēm pasāri pāya sūtihaum..69..

Verse no. 7/69—'I lack the eightfold path of Yoga<sup>1</sup>, all the aids and necessary things for comfortable survival in this world and liberation of the soul, am dark in mind and speech, and am very downtrodden and lowly by birth, ancestry and deeds. I lack intellect, strength, good emotions, devotion, talents, knowledge, luck and fame. Only Lord Sri Ram's holy Name can give salvation to this wretched Tulsidas. By chanting the Lord's Name I have managed to even deceive Sri Ram (into believing that I'm a great devotee and a wise-one, whereas I am good-for-nothing).

I have love, devotion and faith only in Lord Ram's holy Name, and I sleep blissfully without any worries only due to the grace of Lord Ram's Name.' [In this verse, Tulsidas praises the glory of Sri Ram's holy Name.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The eight fold path of Yoga involves observance of certain principles These are briefly the following—(1) *Yam* or self restraint of the senses; (2) *Niyam* or observance of certain sacrosanct rules; (3) *Aasan* or postures for meditation; (4) *Pranyam* or breath control exercises for purification of the body and mind; (5) *Pratyahar* or withdrawal of the mind and its control; (6) *Dhaarna* or having a firm conviction, faith and belief on the sanctity and truthfulness of the chosen path; (7) *Dhyan* or contemplation and concentration of the faculties of the mind and intellect, such as visualizing the presence of the supreme Brahm in the point of the forehead between the two eyebrows; and (8) *Samadhi* or a perpetual trance-like state in which the aspirant loses all awareness of the external world and even himself, and remains perpetually in meditation.]

मेरे जान जबते हौ जीव है जनम्यो जग,  
तबते बेसाहो दाम लोह, कोह, कामको ।  
मन तिन्हीकी सेवा, तिन्ही सौ भाउ नीको,  
बचन बनाइ कहौ 'हौ गुलामु रामको' ।।  
नाथहूँ न अपनायो, लोक झूठी है परी, पै  
प्रभुहूँ तेँ प्रबल प्रतापु प्रभुनामको ।  
आपनी भलाई भलो कीजै तौ भलाई, न तौ  
तुलीसीको खुलैगो खजानो खोटे दामको ।।70 ।।

70. mērēm jāna jabatēm haum jīva hvai janamyō jaga,  
tabatēm bēsāhyō dāma lōha, kōha, kāmako.  
mana tinhīkī sēvā, tinhī sōm bhā'u nīkō,  
bacana banā'i kahaur̥ 'haur̥ gulāmu rāmakō'..  
nāthahūm̃ na apanāyō, lōka jhūṭhī hvai parī, pai  
prabhuhū tēm prabala pratāpu prabhunāmakō.  
āpanīm bhalā'ī bhalō kijai tau bhalā'ī, na tau  
tulīsikō khulaigō khajānō khōṭē dāmakō..70..

Verse no. 7/70—'In my (Tulsidas') view, ever since I was born, I have been held captive by such negative traits as greed, anger and lust. [That is, these have overpowered me.]

Therefore, my mind serves them and loves them deeply. As such, I only pretend when I say that I am a servant of Sri Ram. [This is because my mind serves others—my mind is engrossed in feeding its desires for more and more of the things of this world, and when it is not satisfied it becomes angry.]

Oh Lord! Even you have not accepted me because I am unworthy, but I got false fame in the world (that I am your servant—because I constantly repeat your holy Name). But the magic is that the Lord's name is more powerful than the Lord himself. So, if you do me good because of your merciful nature, so much the better, otherwise my deceitful and cunning nature would come out in the open. [Tulsidas says that if the Lord does not willingly accept him and provide him salvation, then he would keep repeating the Lord's holy and divine Name and force the Lord to care of him just because he takes the Lord's Name inspite of his being totally unworthy of receiving any grace and mercy from the Lord! Here, Tulsidas pleads with Sri Ram to protect his honour because the glory of Sri Ram's name is at stake.]

जोग न बिरागु, जप, जाग, तप, त्यागु, ब्रत,  
तीरथ न धर्म जानौ, बेदबिधि किमि है।  
तुलसी-सो पोच न भयो है, नहि हैहै कहूँ,  
सोचैं सब, याके अघ कैसे प्रभु छमिहैं॥  
मेरें तौ न डरु, रघुबीर! सुनौ, साँची कहौं,  
खल अनखैहैं तुम्हैं, सज्जन न गमिहैं।  
भले सुकृतीके संग मोहि तुलाँ तौलिए तौ,  
नामकें प्रसाद भारु मेरी ओर नमिहैं॥७१॥

71. jōga na birāgu, japa, jāga, tapa, tyāgu, brata,  
tīratha na dharma jānaum̐, bēdabidhi kimi hai.  
tulasī-sō pōca na bhayō hai, nahi hvaihai kahūm̐,  
sōcaim̐ saba, yākē agha kaisē prabhu chamihaim̐..  
mērēm̐ tau na ḍaru, raghubīra! sunau, sām̐cī kahaum̐,  
khala anakhaihaim̐ tumhaim̐, sajjana na gamihaim̐.  
bhalē sukr̥tīkē saṅga mōhi tulām̐ taulī'ē tau,  
nāmakēm̐ prasāda bhāru mērī ōra namihaim̐..71..

Verse no. 7/71—'I do not know that eight fold path of Yoga, nor the grand virtues of renunciation, chanting of Mantras, Vedic rituals, penance, detachment, fasting and other religious observances, pilgrimage or the laws of Dharma (righteousness). I also do not know the laws of the Vedas. No one was, and shall be, as degenerate and lowly as Tulsidas is. That is why people wonder how my sins will be ever forgiven (i.e. how I shall be ever redeemed).

Oh Lord Raghubir (another name of Lord Ram since he was born in the race of king of Raghu)! Listen, I tell you the truth, that still I'm not afraid. If you forgive me, the wicked will be unhappy with you (because you would have foiled their design and intention of keeping me in their fold), but gentlemen and saintly people would be pleased (because they expect such a magnanimous and benevolent gesture from you). If you weigh me against some great man of noble deeds, the scale will tilt in my favour because I have your holy Name with me!' [Tulsidas says here that all the noble deeds are no match for Lord Ram's name, its great glory and marvelous effects.]

जातिके, सुजातिके, कुजातिके पेटागि बस  
खाए दूक सबके, बिदित बात दुनी सो।  
मानस-बचन-कायँ किए पाप सतिभायँ,  
रामको कहाइ दासु दगाबाज पुनी सो।  
रामनामको प्रभाउ, पाउ, महिमा, प्रतापु,

तुलसी-सो जग मनिअत महामुनी-सो ।  
 अतिही अभागो, अनुरागत न रामपद,  
 मूढ़! एतो बड़ो अचिरिजु देखि-सुनी सो ॥72॥

72. jātikē, sujātikē, kujātikē pēṭāgi basa  
 khā'ē ṭūka sabakē, bidita bāta dunīm sō.  
 mānasa-bacana-kāyam' ki'ē pāpa satibhāyam',  
 rāmakō kahā'i dāsu dagābāja punī sō.  
 rāmanāmakō prabhā'u, pā'u, mahimā, pratāpu,  
 tulasī-sō jaga mani'ata mahāmuni-sō.  
 atihīm abhāgō, anurāgata na rāmapada,  
 mūrha! ētō baṛō aciriju dēkhi-sunī sō..72..

Verse no. 7/72—'Due to hunger, I begged from all types of people—belonging to all castes, creed, sects and clans; this fact is known to all in this world. I have committed a lot of sins by my thought, speech and deeds. And though I called myself Sri Ram's servant, I remained deceitful and cunning.

Now, look at the glory and the great effect of Lord Ram's holy Name that a wretched and rascal like Tulsidas is regarded by the world as a great and holy man (like Valmiki). Oh Idiot! You are really a fool! After seeing such a miracle it is so unfortunate that you still do not have an abiding, true and sincere love and devotion in Lord Ram's holy feet.'

जायो कुल मंगन, बधावनो बजायो, सुनि  
 भयो परितापु पापु जननी-जनकको ।  
 बारें ललात-बिललात द्वार-द्वार दीन,  
 जानत हो चारि फल चारि ही चनकको ॥  
 तुलसी सो साहेब समर्थको सुसेवकु है,  
 सुनत सिहात सोचु बिधिहू गनकको ।  
 नामुराम! रावरो सयानो किधौ बावरो,  
 जो करत गिरीतें गरु तनतें तनकको ॥73॥

73. jāyō kula maṅgana, badhāvanō bajāyō, suni  
 bhayō paritāpu pāpu janani-janakakō.  
 bārētēm lalāta-bilalāta dvāra-dvāra dīna,  
 jānata hō cāri phala cāri hī canakakō..  
 tulasī sō sāhēba samarthakō susēvaku hai,  
 sunata sihāta sōcu bidhihū ganakakō.  
 nāmurāma! rāvarō sayānō kidhaurā bāvarō,  
 jō karata girītēm garu tṛṇatēm tanakakō..73..

Verse no. 7/73—'I was born in a poor Brahmin household, and there were celebrations. But my parents were unhappy (because of their poverty, they regarded me as a burden—another mouth to feed). Then, since I was born in poverty, since childhood I had to wander from house to house greedily, writhing with hunger (for

morsels of food). I regarded four grains of gram that I got by begging equivalent to the four celebrated fruits of wealth, dharma, fulfilled desire, and salvation.

Now Tulsidas has become a servant (devotee) of Lord Ram—on hearing this, even an astrologer like Brahma (the creator) is worried and full of envy. [Brahma is astonished that fate had destined me to ever remain wretched and lowly, then how come I have become so holy, exalted and famous? Surely, it is only due to the influence of Lord Ram's name.]

I don't know whether your name (Lord Ram's holy name) is clever and cunning, or a mad maverick, for it can make one who is even humbler-than-grass (i.e. as useless as a weed) into one who is heavier-than-a-mountain (i.e. transform the lowest of the lowly into higher than the lofty and the most exalted).'

बेदहूँ पुरान कही, लोकहूँ बिलोकिअत,  
 रामनाम ही सों रीझें सकल भलाई है।  
 कासीहूँ मरत उपदेसत महेसु सोई,  
 साधना अनेक चितई न चित लाई है।  
 छाछीको ललात जे, ते रामनामकेँ प्रसाद,  
 खात, खुनसात सोंधे दूधकी मलाई है।  
 रामराज सुनिअत राजनीतिकी अवधि,  
 नामु राम! रावरो तौ चामकी चलाई है॥७४॥

74. bēdahūṁ' purāna kahī, lōkahūṁ' bilōki'ata,  
 rāmanāma hī sōṁ rījhēm sakala bhalā'ī hai.  
 kāsihū marata upadēsata mahēsu sō'ī,  
 sādhanā anēka cita'ī na cita lā'ī hai.  
 chāchīkō lalāta jē, tē rāmanāmakēm prasāda,  
 khāta, khunasāta sōndhē dūdhakī malā'ī hai.  
 rāmarāja suni'ata rājanītikī avadhi,  
 nāmu rāma! rāvarō tau cāmakī calā'ī hai..74..

Verse no. 7/74—'It is said by the Vedas and the Purans as well as seen in this world that having love for Lord's Name is beneficial in every way. When one dies in Kashi (Varanasi), Lord Mahadev (Shiva) also gives salvation (by uttering this holy Name in the ears of the dying man). He (Lord Shiva) has not paid any attention to any other means (of salvation). Those who were eager to have even butter-milk to feed their stomach (for even this humblest of food was not available to them) are now reluctant to eat scented cream of milk. [That is, those who were earlier so unfortunate that they couldn't find anything to eat or drink, are now so well and over fed that they reject the choichest of food, thanks to the glory of Sri Ram's holy and divine Name.]

In the kingdom of Sri Ram, political science is practiced in its best form! That is why oh Lord it appears that your Name has minted coins out of worthless hide (i.e. even worthless people have become valuable due to Sri Ram's holy Name). [The Lord's holy Name has given importance to worthless people so as to increase manifold the number of faithful followers of Sri Ram just like politicians pamper the vast number of ordinary and the middle class people in order to garner their support and votes.]'

सोच-संकटनि सोचु संकटु परत, जर  
 जरत, प्रभाउ नाम ललित ललामको।

बूढ़िऔ तरति बिगरीऔ सुधरति बात,  
 होत देखि दाहिनो सुभाउ बिधि बामको ।।  
 भागत अभागु, अनुरागत बिरागु, भागु  
 जागत आलसि तुलसीहू-से निकामको ।  
 धाई धारि फिरिकै गोहारि हितकारी होति,  
 आई मीचु मिटति जपत रामनामको ।।75 ।।

75. sōca-saṅkaṭani sōcu saṅkaṭu parata, jara  
 jarata, prabhā'u nāma lalita lālāmakō.  
 būḍiau tarati bigarī'au sudharati bāta,  
 hōta dēkhi dāhinō subhā'u bidhi bāmakō..  
 bhāgata abhāgu, anurāgata birāgu, bhāgu  
 jāgata ālasi tulasīhū-sē nikāmakō.  
 dhā'ī dhāri phirikai gōhāri hitakārī hōti,  
 ā'ī mīcu miṭati japata rāmanāmakō..75..

Verse no. 7/75—'Lord Ram's holy Name is a Mantra (a spiritual formula) that is beautiful and the best amongst all the Mantras. It has such a stupendous magical effect that worries and troubles themselves get worried and troubled, and fever itself gets tormented by heat when one invokes this eclectic and powerful Mantra. [That is, the Lord's holy Name can chase away all worries and troubles, and it can eliminate all causes of torments that afflict a devotee of the Lord.]

The Name of the Lord is so powerful and effective that it can make a drowned (sunk, submerged, capsized) boat cross over to the other side (of the river), undo things that have already been finished, and make even a malevolent and unfavourable Brahma (the creator) into one who is most favourable, benign and benevolent. Seeing a person who invokes Lord Ram's holy Name, misfortunes run away (i.e. they leave Sri Ram's devotee alone), renunciation begins to show fondness for such a man (i.e. such a person begins to inculcate the grand virtue of dispassion and renunciation, called Vairagya), and luck begins to shine upon Tulsidas who is luckless and indolent. An army of thieves becomes a protector (instead of robbing), and even death is averted by chanting Lord Ram's holy Name.'

आँधरो अधम जड़ जाजरो जराँ जवनु  
 सूकरकें सावक ढकाँ ढकेल्यो मगमें ।  
 गिरो हिउँ हहरि 'हराम हो, हराम हन्यो',  
 हाय! हाय! करत परीगो कालफगमें ।।  
 'तुलसी' बिसोक है त्रिलोकपतिलोक गयो  
 नामकें प्रताप, बात बिदित है जगमें ।  
 सोई रामनामु जो सनेहसों जपत जनु,  
 ताकी महिमा क्यों कही है जाति अगमें ।।76 ।।

76. āṁdharō adhama jara jājarō jarām' javanu  
 sūkarakēm sāvaka ḍhakām' ḍhakēlyō magamēm.  
 girō hi'ēm' hahari 'harāma hō, harāma han'yō',  
 hāya! hāya! karata parīgō kālaphagamēm..  
 'tulasi' bisōka hvai trilōkapatilōka gayō  
 nāmakēm pratāpa, bāta bidita hai jagamēm.  
 sō'ī rāmanāmu jō sanēhasōm japata janu,



tākī mahimā kyōm kahī hai jāti agamēm..76..

Verse no. 7/76—A young piglet pushed a sinful, blind, idiotic and an old wretched Muslim on the way. He fell down and started crying ‘Oh! This Haraam (an abusive expletive) has killed me’, and so crying, he died. Tulsidas says that the Muslim was rid of all sorrows, and he went straight to the holy abode of Lord Ram—this is well known in this world. [The word ‘Haraam’ has 2 parts: Ha+Raam. So Tulsidas says that though he was abusing the piglet, the very pronouncement of Sri Ram’s name ‘Ram’, even if un-intentionally and as part of an abuse, was enough to liberate the Muslim man and give him deliverance.]

The same Lord Ram’s holy Name, if chanted with love and devotion, can naturally do wonders. Say, who can describe its great glories?

जापकी न तप-खपु कियो, न तमाइ जोग,  
जाग न बिराग, त्याग, तीरथ न तनको ।  
भाईको भरोसो न खरो-सो बैरु बैरीहू सों,  
बलु अपनो न, हितू जननी न जनको ॥  
लोकको न डरु, परलोकको न सोचु, देव-  
सेवा न सहाय, गर्बु धामको न धनको ।  
रामही के नामतेँ जो होई सोई नीको लागै,  
ऐसोई सुभाउ कछु तुलसीके मनको ॥77॥

77. jāpakī na tapa-khapu kiyō, na tamā'i jōga,  
jāga na birāga, tyāga, tīratha na tanakō.  
bhā'ikō bharōsō na kharō-sō bairu bairīhū sōm,  
balu apanō na, hitū janani na janakō..  
lōkakō na ḍaru, paralōkakō na sōcu, dēva-  
sēvā na sahāya, garbu dhāmakō na dhanakō.  
rāmahī kē nāmatēm jō hō'ī sō'ī nīkō lāgai,  
aisō'ī subhā'u kachu tulasīkē manakō..77..

Verse no. 7/77—‘I had never chanted or repeated the Lord’s holy Mantras (i.e. I have never done Japa), nor have I undergone the hardships of Tapasya (i.e. I have not done penances and observed austerities), and I have no desire for doing Yoga (meditation practices), Yagya (rituals of fire sacrifice), Vairagya (the virtue of renunciation), Tyag (to leave all attachments), and Tirath (going on pilgrimage).

I do not have reliance (faith) in my brother (i.e. I do not expect that my brother would ever come to my aid when needed), nor do I have any enmity towards my enemy (i.e. though I have no animosity towards my enemy, he still won’t come to help me). I have no support of my own strength, nor do I have helpful parents. But inspite of such loneliness and lack of support from any quarter, I have no fear either of this world nor any worry of the one after death. I have no strength that is usually derived by doing service to the Gods (for I have never served anyone except Sri Ram). I also have nothing to be proud of as far as wealth and property is concerned.’

Tulsidas says that his natural habit, tendency and temperament are such that whatever happens (or is achieved) on the strength of, or by the virtue of Lord Ram’s holy Name appears good for him, and is gladly acceptable by him.

ईसु न, गनेसु न, दिनेसु न, धनेसु न,

सुरेसु, सुर, गौरि, गिरपति नहि जपने ।  
 तुम्हरेई नामको भरोसो भव तरिबेको,  
 बैठे-उठे, जागत-बागत, सोएँ, सपने ॥  
 तुलसी है बावरो सो रावरोई रावरी सौं,  
 रावरेऊ जानि जियँ कीजिए जु अपने ।  
 जानकीरमन मेरे! रावरें बदनु फेरें,  
 ठाउँ न समाउँ कहाँ, सकल निरपने ॥78॥

78. īsu na, ganēsu na, dinēsu na, dhanēsu na,  
 surēsu, sura, gauri, girapati nahi japanē.  
 tumharē'ī nāmakō bharōsō bhava taribēkō,  
 baiṭhēm-uthēm, jāgata-bāgata, sō'ēm, sapanēm..  
 tulasī hai bāvarō sō rāvarō'ī rāvarī saum,  
 rāvarē'ū jāni jiyam' kiji'ē ju apanē.  
 jānakīramana mērē! rāvarēm badanu phērēm,  
 ṭhā'um' na samā'um' kahām, sakala nirapanē..78..

Verse no. 7/78—I will not chant the name of Shiva, Ganesh, Sun, Kuber, Indra, Devas, Gauri or Brahma etc. (i.e. I shall not worship any one other Lord except my beloved Lord Sri Ram).

In this world, oh Lord, I have only your (Sri Ram's) name as my succour and support while awake, asleep, wandering, sitting or dreaming etc. It is the only means by which I can get liberation and deliverance.

Though Tulsidas is (considered) mad, but I swear oh Lord that he is yours. [Tulsidas affirms his loyalty towards Lord Ram.] Keeping this in mind you (Sri Ram) should accept him.

Oh my dear Janki Raman (Sita's Lord, Sri Ram)! [By using the word 'Jankiraman', Tulsidas wants to say that Sri Ram is as dear to him as he is to Janki or Sita, the Lord's divine consort.] If you turn away from me, I shall have no place to live; all the people except you are strangers for me.'

[The reader should not be confused by the use of 'I' and 'Tulsidas' simultaneously. The speaker is Tulsidas himself. Sometimes he speaks in the first person narrative, and sometimes in the third person. Similarly, it would be often seen that he addresses himself with the pronoun 'he' as if he was addressing or referring to a second or a third person. This is his typical style of writing. In all these cases, Tulsidas is addressing only himself, but in such a manner that makes it appear that he is an independent observer.]

जाहिर जहानमें जमानो एक भाँति भयो,  
 बैचिए बिबुधधेनु रासभी बेसाहिए ।  
 ऐसेऊ कराल कलिकालमें कृपाल! तेरे  
 नामकें प्रताप न त्रिताप तन दाहिए ॥  
 तुलसी तिहारो मन-बचन-करम, तैंहि  
 नार्ते नेह-नेमु निज ओरतें निबाहिए ।  
 रंकके नेवाज रघुराज! राजा राजनिके,  
 उमरि दराज महाराज तेरी चाहिए ॥79॥

79. jāhira jahānamēm jamānō ēka bhāmṭi bhayō,  
 bēnci'ē bibudhadhēnu rāsabhī bēsāhi'ē.  
 aisē'ū karāla kalikālamēm krpāla! tērē

nāmakēṁ pratāpa na tritāpa tana dāhi'ē..  
 tulasī tihārō mana-bacana-karama, tēnhi  
 nātēṁ nēha-nēmu nija ōratēṁ nibāhi'ē.  
 raṅkakē nēvāja raghurāja! rājā rājanikē,  
 umari darāja mahārāja tērī cāhi'ē..79..

Verse no. 7/79—This current era of Kaliyug has become famous for the foolishness of buying a donkey by selling a Kamdhenu cow (which is an all wish-fulfilling priceless cow from whom all desired objects can be obtained). [It means that people have become so stupid out of ignorance that they do not mind exchanging a most valuable thing for something that is worthless.]

Oh merciful Lord! Even in such an era (Kaliyug), it is the glory and greatness of your holy Name that the body does not burn in the 3-fires (known as the Traitap). [These three torments are called 'Daivik' or that caused due to malignant gods and stars, 'Daihi' or those created by old age and diseases, and 'Bhautik' or those caused by worldly and existential problems.]

Tulsidas says, 'I am your devotee by thought, speech, deeds and actions (i.e. in all possible and imaginable ways). Due to this, I expect you to reciprocate, i.e. be loyal towards your ardent devotee, and be biased in favour of me.

Oh benefactor of the poverty-stricken and the unfortunate ones, oh the King of kings, oh the great King of Raghu's Dynasty (i.e. Sri Ram)! We pray that you live long (so that we live under your benevolent protection for-ever).'

स्वारथ सयानप, प्रपंचु परमारथ,  
 कहायो राम! रावरो हौं, जानत जहान है।  
 नामकें प्रताप बाप! आजु लौं निबाही नीकें,  
 आगेको गोसाईं! स्वामी सबल सुजान है।।  
 कलिकी कुचालि देखि दिन-दिन दूनी, देव!  
 पाहरुई चोर हेरि हिए हहरान है।  
 तुलसीकी, बलि, बार-बारहीं सँभार कीबी,  
 जद्यपि कृपानिधानु सदा सावधान है।।80।।

80. svāratha sayānapa, prapañcu paramāratha,  
 kahāyō rāma! rāvarō hauṁ, jānata jahāna hai.  
 nāmakēṁ pratāpa bāpa! āju laurṁ nibāhī nīkēṁ,  
 āgēkō gōsā'īm! svāmī sabala sujāna hai..  
 kalikī kucāli dēkhi dina-dina dūnī, dēva!  
 pāharū'ī cōra hēri hi'ē haharāna hai.  
 tulasīkī, bali, bāra-bārahīm sam̐bhāra kībī,  
 jadyapi kṛpānidhānu sadā sāvadhāna hai..80..

Verse no. 7/80—'I am alert, clever and wise where my self interest is involved, and un-interested, evasive and indifferent where others are concerned. Oh Sri Ram! Still I am called 'yours' and the world knows me as such. Oh Father! Your name has sustained me till now, and oh Lord, for the future also, you are all-knowing and fully capable of sustaining me. Oh Lord! Seeing the cunningness and deceit of Kaliyug increase day by day, and finding the sentry (guard) a thief, my heart has shaken (I am very afraid that there is no way for salvation for me, and I'll be robbed of it). [Kaliyug is very cunning, and it throws such illusions of charm and happiness that a creature

remains trapped in its quagmire. Tulsidas says that whatever good virtues he possesses are under threat of getting lost under the onslaught of the evil effects of Kaliyug.] '

Tulsidas prays that though the Lord is always alert and he needn't remind the Lord over and over again, but still he can't have patience and reminds him (the Lord) to please take special care of Tulsidas constantly (so that he gets liberation and deliverance).

दिन-दिन दूनो देखि दारिद्र, दुकालु, दुखु,  
दुरितु दुराजु सुख-सुकृत सकोच है।  
मार्गे पैत पावत पचारि पातकी प्रचंड,  
कालकी करालता, भलेको होत पोच है॥  
आपनें तौ एकु अवलंबु अंब हिंभ ज्यों,  
समर्थ सीतानाथ सब संकट बिमोच है।  
तुलसीकी साहसी सराहिए कृपाल राम!  
नामकेँ भरोसेँ परिनामको निसोच है॥81॥

81. dina-dina dūnō dēkhi dāridu, dukālu, dukhu,  
duritu durāju sukha-sukṛta sakōca hai.  
māgēm̐ painta pāvata pacāri pātakī pracaṇḍa,  
kālakī karālatā, bhalēkō hōta pōca hai..  
āpanēm̐ tau ēku avalambu amba ḍimbha jyōm̐,  
samartha sītānātha saba saṅkaṭa bimōca hai.  
tulasīkī sāhasī sarāhi'ē kṛpāla rāma!  
nāmakēm̐ bharōsēm̐ parināmakō nisōca hai..81..

Verse no. 7/81—Seeing the multifold growth of poverty, bad times, sorrows, sins and bad governance, the (virtues of) happiness and good and noble deeds are feeling shy and hesitant. [That is, during the evil times of Kaliyug, good virtues become eclipsed under the dark shadow of evil and perversions.]

Times have become so bad that rascals get their wishes fulfilled by sheer muscle-power, but good people suffer. Just as a child has its mother as the only hope and succour so does Tulsidas have only Sri Ram as the only liberator from all the troubles that confront him. The Lord is his only all-able benefactor. Oh merciful Lord Ram! Praise the courage and faith of Tulsidas who has become free from all worries relying solely on the strength of your holy Name. [Tulsidas tells the Lord to pay special attention on him because he is totally dependent upon the Lord's holy Name in all spheres of life, and if any wrong happens to Tulsidas the Lord would not be able to wash off this ignominy and scar for all times to come.]

मोह-मद मात्यो, रात्यो कुमति-कुनारिसों,  
बिसारि बेद-लोक-लाज, आँकरो अचेतु है।  
भावे सो करत, मुँह आवै सो कहत, कछु  
काहूकी सहत नाहिँ, सरकस हेतु है॥  
तुलसी अधिक अधमाई हूँ अजामिलतेँ,  
ताहूमें सहाय कलि कपटनिकेतु है।  
जैबेको अनेक टेक, एक टेक हैबेकी, जो  
पेट-प्रियपूत हित रामनामु लेतु है॥82॥

82. mōha-mada mātyō, rātyō kumati-kunārisōm,  
 bisāri bēda-lōka-lāja, ām̐karō acētu hai.  
 bhāvē sō karata, mum̐ha āvai sō kahata, kachu  
 kāhūkī sahata nāhim, sarakasa hētu hai..  
 tulasī adhika adhamā'ī hū ajāmilatēm,  
 tāhūmēm sahāya kali kapaṭanikētu hai.  
 jaibēkō anēka ṭēka, ēka ṭēka hvaibēkī, jō  
 pēṭa-priyapūta hita rāmanāmu lētu hai..82..

Verse no. 7/82—'He (Tulsidas) has become arrogant due to the pride (intoxicating effects) of various possessions, is indulgent in a wife (woman) represented by ignorance, and is careless enough to neglect the sanctity and teachings of the Vedas and good society (of saints). He does what he wants (without thinking), says what comes to his mouth, and because of arrogance, does not pay heed to anyone.'

Tulsidas says that he is more evil than Ajamil, and to add to all his predicaments, 'Kali' (the personified form of Kaliyug)—who is a treasury of deceit and fraud—is his helper and assistant.

There are many paths to ruin but only one path for salvation, and it is the path of chanting the holy and divine Name of Lord Sri Ram. But Tulsidas uses it to satisfy the needs of the stomach (i.e. his hunger) by employing it to beg for food and other necessities of life.

[He means that just like Ajamil had called the Lord's name while he was actually calling his son 'Narain' at the time of death when the messengers of Yam, the god of death and hell, began to torture him, Tulsidas also chants Sri Ram's name just so that he can get something to eat and fulfill the needs of his mortal body. But the Lord is so merciful that though his Name is pronounced for other reasons, he still keeps the sanctity of the holy Name and provides salvation to the caller.]

### Description of Kaliyug

जागिए न सोइए, बिगोइए जनमु जायँ,  
 दुख, रोग रोइए, कलसु कोह-कामको ।  
 राजा-रंक, रागी औ बिरागी, भूरिभागी, ये  
 अभागी जीव जरत, प्रभाउ कलि बामको ।।  
 तुलसी! कबंध-कैसो धाइबो बिचारु अंध!  
 धंध देखिअत जग, सोचु परिनामको ।  
 सोइबो जो रामके सनेहकी समाधि-सुखु,  
 जागिबो जो जीह जपै नीकें रामनामको ।।83 ।।

83. jāgi'ē na sō'i'ē, bigō'i'ē janamu jāyam,  
 dukha, rōga rō'i'ē, kalēsu kōha-kāmakō.  
 rājā-raṅka, rāgi au birāgi, bhūribhāgi, yē  
 abhāgi jīva jarata, prabhā'u kali bāmakō..  
 tulasī! kabandha-kaisō dhā'ibō bicāru andha!  
 dhandha dēkhi'ata jaga, sōcu parināmakō.  
 sō'ibō jō rāmakē sanēhakī samādhi-sukhu,  
 jāgibō jō jīha japai nīkēm rāmanāmakō..83..

Verse no. 7/83—In this world, we neither sleep nor keep awake in a peaceful manner. [That is, we do not find peace and true happiness either when we are awake or when we are asleep. It also means that we are neither ignorant (asleep) nor enlightened (awake) in the true sense because we keep on pursuing the world for its temporary pleasures and comforts, forgetting that in the long run its transient and mirage-like, here now and gone then.]

We are wasting our time in futility. We weep, grieve and wail due to various diseases and sorrows, and suffer mentally due to the troubles created by desires and anger (kalēsu kōha-kāmakō).

Whether a person is a king or a pauper, whether a person is attached to the world or detached from it, whether he considers himself most lucky or must unfortunate—all the creatures are burning (in the fire of torments inflicted by the ‘3 Traitaps’<sup>1</sup>). Verily, this is the overwhelming and universal negative effect and aspect of the wretched era known as Kaliyug<sup>2</sup>.

Tulsidas speaks about himself, ‘Oh you blind fellow (stupid fellow who can’t see the apparent truth)! Think! All the goals and objectives visible in this world are like the running around of headless trunks (torsos from which the head has been severed; an aphorism for a body without a mind-intellect), the end results of which are nothing but worries. The real sleep (which gives peace) is the bliss of Samadhi (a trance like state of body and mind) obtained by having love and devotion for Lord Ram, and to be awake is to chant Lord Sri Ram’s Holy Name by the tongue. [All other modes of sleeping and waking are false and delusory.]’

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The ‘3 Traitaps’ are the following—(i) Adibhautik: torments and miseries that are created by other creatures and things of the physical world; (ii) Adidaivik: torments and miseries that are created by bad stars and opposed gods; and (iii) Adhyatmik: torments and miseries that are created by spiritual problems.

<sup>2</sup>‘Kaliyug’ has been described in Ram Charit Manas also, in its Uttar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 97—to Doha no. 103 in great detail.

See Kavitawali’s Uttar Kand, verse nos. 97-105 herein below also.]

बरन-धरमु गयो, आश्रम निवासु तज्यो,  
 त्रासन चकित सो परावनो परो-सो है।  
 करमु उपासना कुबासनाँ बिनास्यो ग्यानु,  
 बचन-बिराग, बेष जगतु हरो-सो है॥  
 गोरख जगायो जोगु, भगति भगायो लोगु,  
 निगम-नियोगतें सो केलि ही छरो-सो है।  
 कायँ-मन-बचन सुभायँ तुलसी है जाहि  
 रामनामको भरोसो, ताहिको भरोसो है॥84॥

84. barana-dharamu gayō, āśrama nivāsu tajyō,  
 trāsana cakita sō parāvanō parō-sō hai.  
 karamu upāsanā kubāsanām̐ bināsyō gyānu,  
 bacana-birāga, bēśa jagatu harō-sō hai..  
 gōrakha jagāyō jōgu, bhagati bhagāyō lōgu,  
 nigama-niyōgatēm̐ sō kēli hī charō-sō hai.  
 kāyam̐-manā-bacana subhāyam̐ tulasī hai jāhi  
 rāmanāmakō bharōsō, tāhikō bharōsō hai..84..

Verse no. 7/84—During these bad times, the regulations and rules of behaviour, known as ‘Varna Dharma’ that regulates the life and conduct of the members of the four principles castes of the society have become extinct or gone awry. [The four sections of the society are Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra.]<sup>1</sup>

The four ‘Ashrams’ have abandoned their assigned places. [That is, no one follows them any more. [The four ‘Ashrams’ are the four periods into which a person’s life have been divided by the scriptures, such as Brahmacharya or the life of celibacy when he studies and prepares to face the world as an adult, Grihastha or the householder phase, Sanyasa or the phase when he renounces the world and transfers his worldly responsibilities to his heirs, and Vanprastha or the last phase when he literally turns away from the world and prepares for his exit from it by devoting time on spiritual pursuit.]]<sup>2</sup>

Every one is stupefied and frightened due to the stunning affect of the torments and tribulations that have been created by the upswing of un-righteousness and unlawful actions (known as ‘Adharma’).

Duty, devotion and wisdom have been destroyed by perversion and a strong desire to enjoy the pleasures of senses and objects of the world.

Pseudo renunciation which is limited to fraudulent and deceiving speeches and bodily marks have cheated the world out of its wits.

By starting the system of Yoga (meditation and contemplation as a main tool to attain liberation and deliverance), Guru Gorakhnath (the patron deity of Yogis or ascetics, said to an incarnation of Lord Shiva and the patron-saint of the city of Gorakhpur in eastern U.P.) had weaned people away from having devotion and a sense of surrender to God, and the precept of Yoga that has been enunciated by the Vedas (and the Upanishads) was exploited by him to cheat (i.e. lead astray) the unwary world.

Tulsidas says that only those who have natural faith and reliance on Lord Sri Ram’s Holy Name in their actions (of the body), mind (the thought process of the mind) and speech (the utterances and things they speak) are the only ones who can be certain of salvation.

[Why is it so? Tulsidas elaborates—] Yogas and other means of salvation are very difficult to follow and most arduous, and their results are also not certain. [That is, whereas having ‘Bhakti’ or devotion for Lord God is an easy method to attain emancipation and salvation because it is free from any cumbersome processes and rigid requirements, the other path of ‘Yoga’ is fraught with extreme difficulty and danger. Even the Upanishads have reiterated that though the tool of Yoga is very potent and effective but it is very difficult and dangerous at the same time, because for one its rules and steps are extremely complicated and require extreme caution and guidance while practicing them, and for another if they are not correctly followed then the practitioner suffers horribly, even leading to a horrifying death.]]<sup>3</sup>

[Note :- Besides the general description of Kaliyug in Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, from Chauapi line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 97—right upto Doha no. 103, the following lines are specifically relevant here: (a) Doha no. 97; (b) Chaupai line nos. 1-2 that precede Doha no. 98; (c) Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 99; (d) Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 100; (e) Chanda line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 102.

<sup>1</sup>The 4 *Varnas*—The Hindu society has been divided into four sections or classes or segments by ancient sages for the sake of convenience and proper regulation of the huge society. It helped in judicious distribution of work to be done, to regulate the functioning of the society by delegation of authority and clearly specifying the jobs

each section is supposed to do to maintain order and system in the world, to prevent overlapping of functions and avoid anarchy and chaos. This system helped in judicious regulation of the working of the society as a whole because each individual member of any given Varna knew what is expected of him. It helped in proper distribution of work that had to be done for day-to-day survival, without any duplicity and tussle.

These four sections are— (a) Brahmins\*—the learned and teaching class; a wise one well-versed in the knowledge of the ultimate Truth about the supernatural Being called Brahm. They also presided over religious functions as priests, because these functions were central to life in the Vedic period; (b) Kshatriyas—they were the warrior, fighting, kingly class. They were assigned the job of giving protection to the society, dispensing justice and maintaining general law and order. (c) Vaishyas—they were the trading and farming class responsible for commerce and wealth generation. They provided for the necessities for a comfortable life. And finally (d) the Shudras—the service class of people whose main function was to free the other three classes from the humdrums of daily chores and concentrate their energies to the particular jobs assigned to those classes to which they belonged.

In ancient Indian tradition, the kings and the ruling class belonged to the caste called 'Kshatriya', and their main job/vocation was giving protection and providing sustenance to their subjects belonging to the other three castes. To do this, they had to wage wars—some in defense and some in aggression because they wanted to expand their area of influence. But wars nevertheless involved bloodshed which any peace loving soul of Satwic tendency would abhor. So a king could be Satwic by temperament but Rajsic by occupation and compulsion. Those who were Satwic were prescribed the non-violent method of worship and sacrifices to Goddess Durga during peace times as described in *Devipurana Mahabhagwat*, Canto 46, verse nos. 15-17½, while those of Rajsic bearings were to do worship requiring animal sacrifices as described in verse nos. 17-21, especially in preparation for and during wars. Even today it is observed that the army is non-vegetarian in its food habits because the soldiers cannot kill their enemies in battle—as is required of them because of their vocation as a soldier—if they avoid killing and instead show mercy and compassion on their enemies. Perhaps this is the reason why meat-eating is never looked down in army; in fact, it is a normal diet amongst the Kshatriya class. Though mercy and compassion are indeed supremely good qualities, they are not meant for the battlefield unless the enemy surrenders and relents. The world would have been a 'heaven-on-earth' if this quality prevailed in the battlefield! However, since Sri Ram was at war with a vicious, unforgiving, cruel and formidable enemy (Ravana), and a lot was at stake (e.g. the very existence of the world and its peace), and it was a no-holds-barred, fierce and uncompromising war, the second category of worship—animal sacrifice symbolising the death of the enemy—was prescribed for him by the Goddess. And this was precisely what Brahma and other Gods did as is evident in verse nos. 33.

Yajur Veda 31<sup>st</sup> Chapter, 11<sup>th</sup> Mantra says that Brahmins are the mouth of society, the Kshatriyas are its arms, Vaishyas are its stomach or abdomen, and Shudras are its legs. The body is regarded as a symbol of the society. As is obvious in this analogy, all these four units of the body must function properly and in close cooperation with each other in order that the body can survive and live comfortably and carry on with its assigned duties in an orderly fashion. The mouth is important because it is the medium by which the body takes food and speaks; the arms procure food and gives protection to the body against enemies; the stomach digests food and



supplies the whole body with the energy needed by it; the abdomen holds all the internal organs; and the legs carry the body wherever it wants to go such as the place where food is available. Since food is the basis necessity of life, this instance is cited here. And the logic can be extended to everything else. Each component of the society must work properly in order that the whole society survives; each component is as vital as the other; each has its own importance in the bigger picture.

As time passed, by and by, the Kshatriya class had become very haughty and arrogant because all physical powers and military strength were vested in it. The king's treasury was supposed to be a common pool where the society could keep its wealth that it generates by toil, and the king was merely its custodian. But as time passed, the kings began to treat this treasury as their personal property, and while they rolled in luxury the peasant class, the working class that toiled day in and day out to generate this wealth hadn't a square meal to eat in their empty tummies and a roof to cover them against the vagaries of cruel Nature. Though the powers and wealth of the Kshatriya class were meant for the welfare of the society as a whole, more often than not these elements went to the head of kings, making them arrogant, haughty, exploitative and insensitive towards others.

We read about an incarnation of Lord Vishnu in the form of sage Parashuram who had eliminated the Kshatriya race several times over by killing them and handing over the earth to the Brahmins. The elimination of such wild kings belonging to the Kshatriya Varna who had deviated from their duties and moral responsibilities that were ordained by ancient sages and seers became obligatory for the Supreme Lord of the world as the Lord was the Father of all, and he could not bear with one of his offsprings making others suffer because of his own pervert behaviour and selfishness. Hence, the Lord assumed the form of sage Parashuram to teach a lesson to such wicked kings who had fallen from their paths.

Killing such Kshatriya kings and restoring the earth to Brahmins should be viewed in this context; it has a great symbolic meaning. Whenever evil tendencies and negativity rises in this world, be it in the guise of demons or kings, the Lord comes down to set the house in order. This is the reason why sage Parashuram is regarded as one of the many incarnations of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Lord of the world.

The logical spin-off of this is that Lord Ram and sage Parashuram are both the same Lord in different roles. What Lord Ram did for the welfare of sages and the humble creatures of the world by killing their tormentor demons led by Ravana of Lanka, sage Parashuram did the same thing by killing arrogant and wicked Kshatriya kings and handing over the world to pious and holy men known as Brahmins.

\*The salient features of Brahmins are the following—they should possess these noble qualities—(1) 'Riju'-be expert in the Rig and the Yajur Vedas, (2) 'Tapa'-should be involved in doing penances, observing austerities and enduring sufferings for the welfare of the soul and the society, (3) 'Santosh'-be contented and satisfied, (4) 'Kshamaa'-to be forgiving and tolerant, (5) 'Sheel'-to have such virtues as good character, dignity, decorum and virtuousness, (6) 'Jitendriya'-to have self control over the sense organs, (7) 'Data'-to be a giver, one who sacrifices his own interests for the benefit of others, (8) 'Gyani'-one who is well learned, wise, enlightened and erudite, (9) 'Dayaalu'-to be merciful and compassionate. [Shatpath Brahman.]

This word 'Brahmin' is too often misunderstood and misinterpreted to mean a particular member of the society who is supposed to be given respect, no matter what his moral and educational standard is. The real intention is not that even a corrupt, unwise, morally depraved and foolish person should be honoured just because he is

born a 'Brahmin'. The intention of the scriptures is never this. In ancient times this was the class of people who were designated to study the scriptures and act as moral and practical guide to the rest of the society. This was envisioned by our ancestors to help regulate the functioning of the society in an orderly manner by dividing the entire working into four clear segments and delineating each segment with a list of duties its members were supposed to do. This prevented clash and duplicity of work, as each of the four classes knew what it is supposed to do. This in effect created a hierarchy in the society, with the learned ones who were known as the 'Brahmins' occupying the upper rung just like a patriarch of a large extended family who oversees the working and welfare of the entire family. A patriarch is an old man, and has the backing of years of experience behind him. Obviously he is the most competent man to give sane and rationale advice to the younger generation. This exactly was the role of the Brahmin.

Even in the modern world, a child is taught to give respect to his elders; its part of his moral education. Hence, 'paying respects to Brahmins' should be understood in the correct perspective.

An entire Upanishad called *Vajra-shuchiko-panishad*, belonging to the Sam Veda tradition is devoted to the subject. The eclectic virtues of Brahmins have been expounded in *Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad*, Canto 3, Brahman 5 as well as in Canto 3, Brahman 8, verse no. 10.

The *Param Hans Parivrajak Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, paragraph no. 7 describes in a holistic way the virtues of a true Brahm as the one who is highly wise, self-realised, erudite and enlightened about the Atma and the principles governing the true meaning of Brahm and such religious signs as doing fire sacrifices, wearing the sacred thread and the tuft of hair on the head, observing sacraments etc.

<sup>2</sup>The four *Ashrams*—The life of a Hindu man is divided into four segments or sections of roughly twenty-five years each. These are called the 'Ashrams'. Briefly, the four principle divisions of a man's life are the following: (i) 'Brahmcharya'—the first part of his life when he is young and is supposed to observe austerities while he studies and acquires knowledge to equip him to face the world when he grows up; (ii) 'Grihastha'—this is the second phase of life when a person marries and lives as a householder; (iii) 'Vaanprastha'—the third phase or division of life when a person prepares to hand the responsibilities of his worldly affairs to his heirs and mentally prepares himself to lead a calm and detached life so that he can get ready for the final phase of old age; and (iv) 'Sanyas'—the fourth and last phase when a person is expected to completely renounce the world and its entanglements, and instead spend the remaining part of his life in spiritual pursuit and searching ways for his spiritual liberation and deliverance.

Now, let us study them in more detail.

(a) Brahmacharya<sup>1</sup>—this is the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of life in which a person studies the scriptures under the tutelage of a wise teacher. This phase of life is marked by austerities, keeping of vows, observing celibacy, abstinence and continence as well as leading a regimental life style of a boarding school. (b) Grihastha—when a person has studied and prepared himself to face the world, he comes back to his house and enters the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase called Grihastha Ashram which is a householder's life. He marries, raises a family, produces wealth and helps to carry forward the cycle of creation. This is the most important and enjoyable phase as well as the most tough one because on the one hand there are the comforts and pleasure of the world to be enjoyed, and on the other hand there are the various tribulations and miseries of a family life alongside the dealings with this deceptive world with all its accompanying horrifying problems. (c)

Vanprastha—this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase when a man hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and renounces his attachments to the house as well as the world, and heads for the forest, leaving the home for his next generation. It is now that he goes on pilgrimage and prepares for the final stage of his life, and (d) Sanyas—this is the 4<sup>th</sup> and last stage of life when there is complete cutting-off of all the ties with the world, spending time in contemplation and meditation, living a life of total renunciation, and begging for food for survival while single mindedly endeavouring for emancipation and salvation. This phase of Sanyas also has many stages depending upon the spiritual elevation and accomplishments of the aspirant, viz. Kutichak, Bahudak, Hansa, Paramhans, Turiyatit and Avadhut.

In brief, the ‘Brahmacharis’ are celibates students who must exercise the greatest self-restraint in order to concentrate their energy on their studies. It is the first phase of life. The ‘Grihastha’ is the householder. After study, the student marries to raise a family and contribute to the continuation of the cycle of creation. This marks the second phase of life. The ‘Vaan-prastha’ is a person who hands over the responsibilities of worldly affairs to his heir and prepares to lead a retired life, literally though the word means to ‘retire to the forest’. This is the third phase of life. And finally, the ‘Sanyasi’ is a person who has renounced the world and spends his time in meditation and contemplation. This is the fourth and the final phase of life. The term “Brahmcharaya”—or one who practices the principles of life in accordance to the eclectic philosophy of Brahm-realisation, is very much misunderstood and misquoted. It primarily refers to that part of life when a practitioner exercises exemplary self-control—or “continence”—over his gross organs of the body so that all his energy and attention can be focused on higher goals of life—such as spiritual upliftment and ‘self’ as well as ‘Brahm’ realisation. Now, if one allows oneself to indulge in gratifying the urges of the body, a lot of his time and energy would be spent on this activity, leaving him exhausted and weary to the extent that he would have little stamina or will left to pursue higher goals of life.

Worldly indulgences can never give sustainable peace, happiness and bliss; it’s like seeking water in a desert mirage. On the other hand, self-restraint that prevents the creature from falling into this trap is ‘Brahmacharya’—i.e. practicing the principles of life as practiced by acclaimed ascetics.

Brahmacharya is to live a life that contributes to Brahm-realisation; it is to practice the principles that enable a person to attain success in his pursuit of knowledge of the higher goals of life, to become wise and learned. Usually the term applies to the first phase of a person’s life, the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of his life, when he is supposed to spend time studying and imbibing knowledge that would prepare him to face life and the tumble and turmoil of the world. A student who concentrates his mind on his studies will obviously do well and shine in his chosen field as compared to one who spends his time enjoying and fooling around.

Therefore, a person who practices the principles of Brahmacharya thorough out his life becomes empowered with special powers and energy that help him to achieve stupendous feats which his peers who fritter away their internal energy in worldly pursuit and self-indulgence can’t hope to achieve.

Brahmacharya is not merely ‘celibacy’ or control over the sexual urges; it is a comprehensive term encompassing “total self-control” over the tendencies of the gross body consisting of the sense organs of action and perception, as well as the subtle aspects of the body consisting of the mind and heart.

These four Ashrams, their characteristic features and virtues are described in detail in an Upanishad called *Ashramo-panishad* belonging to the Atharva Veda

tradition. Refer also to *Kathrudra Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 3 in the context of one taking the vows of Sanyas, the renunciate way of life which is the fourth and the last phase in the life of a man which prepares him for his final liberation and deliverance from this world.

<sup>3</sup>Tulsidas was a saint of the 'Bhakti-path', the path of devotion and surrender to the Lord God. His comments on Gorakhnath should not be taken in the wrong light. What he actually means is that there are so many cults, so many paths, so many beliefs—none of them are wrong as such and the aim of all is to provide the creature a means for his liberation and deliverance. But devotion to Lord God in the form of Sri Ram is the easiest and surest path as tested and verified by so many of the Bhakti-cult saints. Its without hassles and free from formalities as opposed to the path of Yoga which is extremely rigid and cumbersome.

Hence, no sacrilege, insult, demeaning or insolence is meant by Tulsidas at all for the great mystic Gorakhnath. Ordinary people were not mentally and physically fit for doing Yoga, nor did they have the aptitude or inclination for it. So what was the use? If one were to believe that the only way to the soul's liberation and deliverance was to follow the path of Yoga as taught by Gorakhnath then a vast section of the majority would be put-off at the very outset. On the contrary, if the same people were told that one can attain the same objective of the soul by a very easy path of Bhakti for God which is equivalent to loving and having affection for one's dear parent without observing any formalities, and for which there is no eligibility requirement except love, devotion and surrender, then it will cheer the people no end because everyone wants his or her soul to find its peace and rest. This is Tulsidas' intent and it should be clearly understood.

A verse must be properly interpreted and understood in the context of what is being said and what is its intent, for otherwise unintended and unexpected unsavoury situation arises. This principle is very much applicable and evident in this aforesaid verse which seems offending to Gorakhnath whereas its not so at all.

Remember: Tulsidas lived a greater part of his life in Varanasi, and has set his books on the theme of Lord Ram who was a prince of Ayodhya. Both these two pilgrim towns are near the city of Gorakhpur, so ordinary people would be able to understand what Tulsidas means to say when he cites Guru Gorakhnath to emphasise that importance of Bhakti as a better and easier means to attain beatitude and felicity as compared to the doctrine of Yoga as propounded by Gorakhnath. He of course could have cited some other great mystic mentioned in the scriptures, but that would have left the people wondering who he was talking about and what this particular mystic taught. Tulsidas had to drive home the point to people who weren't so learned and well versed, so he decided to cite a local mystic about whom the people had heard much. See the following verses.]

बेद-पुरान बिहाइ सुपंथु, कुमारग, कोटि कुचालि चली है।  
कालु कराल, नृपाल कृपाल न, राजसमाजु बड़ोई छली है।।  
बर्न-बिभाग न आश्रमधर्म, दुनी दुख-दोष-दरिद्र-दली है।  
स्वास्थ्यको परमायुको कलिरामको नामप्रतापु बली है।।85।।

85. bēda-purāna bihā'i supanthu, kumāraga, kōṭi kucālī calī hai.  
kālu karāla, nṛpāla kṛpāla na, rājasamāju baṛō'ī chalī hai..  
barna-bibhāga na āśramadharmā, dunī dukha-dōśa-daridra-dalī hai.

svārathakō paramārathakō kalirāmakō nāmapratāpu balī hai..85..

Verse no. 7/85—The paths shown by the Vedas and the Purans (ancient holy scriptures) have been abandoned, and numerous wrong and misleading evil (false) paths have mushroomed<sup>1</sup>.

The times are difficult, the kings are merciless, and the royal employees (ministers, officers) are very cunning, deceitful, pervert and exploitative<sup>2</sup>.

There is no caste-regulation, nor are the four Ashrams observed. [See verse no. 84 herein above.]<sup>3</sup>

The world is being crushed by sorrows, troubles, faults (crimes and shortcomings), perversion and poverty<sup>4</sup>.

In such a terrible Kaliyug, the strength of Sri Ram's name is the only wayout for protecting self-interest (welfare) and ensuring salvation.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-3 that precede Doha no. 98; Doha no. 100 and its preceding Chaupai line no. 10; Chanda line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 101.

<sup>2</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chanda line no. 6 precedes Doha no. 101.

<sup>3</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 98.

<sup>4</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Doha no. 100 ka; Chanda line no. 10 that precedes Doha no. 101; Chanda line nos. 2-8 that precede Doha no. 102.]

न मिटै भवसंकटु, दुर्घट है तप, तीरथ जन्म अनेक अटो ।  
कलिमें न बिरागु, न ग्यानु कहँ, सबु लागत फोकट झूठ-जटो ॥  
नटु ज्यों जनि पेट-कुपेटक कोटिक चेटक-कौतुक-ठाट ठटो ।  
तुलसी जो सदा सुखु चाहिअ तौ, रसनाँ निसि-बासर रामु रटो ॥86॥

86. na miṭai bhavasankṭu, durghaṭa hai tapa, tīratha janma anēka aṭō.  
kalimēm na birāgu, na gyānu kahūṁ, sabu lāgata phōkaṭa jhūṭha-jaṭō..  
naṭu jyōm jani pēṭa-kupēṭaka kōṭika cēṭaka-kautuka-ṭhāṭa ṭhaṭō.  
tulasī jō sadā sukhu cāhi'a tau, rasanām' nisi-bāsara rāmu raṭō..86..

Verse no. 7/86—The troubles of this mundane, deluding world cannot be so easily removed and done away with because Tapa (austerities/penances) are very difficult to practice.

One may wander in holy cities and pilgrim places (tīratha) for generations (for many births), but he will not find renunciation, wisdom and true knowledge anywhere during the corrupt era of Kaliyug—every thing appears to be lacking in sincerity and substance, and is full of falsehood, selfishness and exploitation.

Don't weave an imaginary dream-land of illusions (illusive charms and an artificial world of 'make-belief') for the cause of your stomach (i.e. to feed yourself) like a circus artiste. [Here, Tulsidas warns those who live in pilgrim towns and pretend to be holy men, but they are engaged in all sorts of trickery and deceit to make money. They exploit the emotions of innocent devotees and pilgrims to enrich themselves, telling all sorts of lies by the bucket-full. It is very rare to find an honest man and a true guide even in the so-called 'holy places' nowadays as everyone is engaged in making money and exploiting the crowd of pilgrim, thinking them to be animals for sacrifice who will 'nevertheless be fleeced and all their purses emptied by others, so why not by me, for isn't it foolish to let money that is standing at the door

to slip by when it is willing to fall on my lap!'. Tulsidas warns that the gain got by this evil venture is like the charm of a dream world, for when the soul awakens to the reality it finds the situation all the worse.]

Tulsidas advises that if you want eternal peace and happiness then chant Lord Sri Ram's Holy Name constantly by your tongue (without getting distracted and misled by myriad of faiths and beliefs that are so overwhelming during Kaliyug that they would trap you just like the mirage seen in a hot desert where water seems to simmer on the horizon, but which is nothing but a death-trap for the thirst traveller.)

दमु दुर्गम, दान, दया, मख, कर्म, सुधर्म अधीन सबै धनको ।  
तप, तीर्थ, साधन, जोग, बिरागसो होइ, नहीं दृढ़ता तनको ।।  
कलिकाल करालमें 'राम कृपालु' यहै अवलंबु बड़ो मनको ।  
'तुलसी' सब संजमहीन सबै, एक नाम-अधारु सदा जनको ।। 87 ।।

87. damu durgama, dāna, dayā, makha, karma, sudharma adhīna sabai dhanakō.

tapa, tīratha, sādhana, jōga, birāgasōm hō'i, nahīm dr̥ghatā tanakō..  
kalikāla karālamēr̥ 'rāma krpālu' yahai avalambu baṛō manakō..  
'tulasi' saba sanjama hīna sabai, ēka nāma-adhāru sadā janakō..87..

Verse no. 7/87—[Tulsidas says that there are so many tools prescribed in the scriptures that can help a person obtain a state of spiritual exaltedness and bliss. But he wonders 'are they actually possible to implement?']

Self control (restraint of the sense-organs—'dama') is difficult to actually practice. Doing charity (dāna), showing mercy and compassion (to the needy by providing them their necessity of life—dayā), doing religious fire sacrifices (makha), doing good deeds (such as helping others and giving alms to the poor— karma), and generally doing righteous deeds as prescribed by the tenets of Dharma (sudharma)—all of them are dependent on wealth. [He means that poverty can force a person to deviate from those noble and chosen paths. A poor man can't be expected to do charity and give alms, nor can he help others even if he wants to do so. Fire sacrifices and all other religious activities need money, even offerings need to be made to please the deity when one visits a temple! When faced with hunger and sufferings associated with poverty, all sense of what is right and what is wrong go for a toss. Obviously, money is a great force which plays an important role if a man sincerely wants to practice the different activities prescribed in the scriptures for one's spiritual welfare.]

Tapa (austerities/penances), tīratha (pilgrimage), sādhana (various religious methods to attain one's spiritual objective), and jōga (meditation) can be done only when one has developed thorough 'Vairagya' (renunciation and total detachment from the world with its illusive attractions of the sense organs). But unfortunately, the mind is not at all stable; it is fickle and indecisive, jumping as it does between renunciation at one moment and getting attracted to the myriad charms of the world at the other instant. Say then, how can one be steady in pursuing these auspicious paths for one's spiritual well-being (because no great goal is ever attained if the mind is flickering and lacks concentration and commitment)?

In this horrible state of affairs prevalent in the era of Kaliyug, the only relief for the mind (and therefore for the spiritual aspirant) is the thought that Lord Sri Ram is very kind and merciful. [This helps the aspirant to focus his attention on one point of succour and solace, and to practice devotion and surrender to Lord Ram as an easy

means for attaining his spiritual goal as compared to other means listed in this verse which need a very calm and steady mind, something that is very difficult to achieve.]

Tulsidas says that all the people in the present age of Kaliyug are lacking in all sorts of qualities or abilities (that are required for spiritual needs and attaining liberation and deliverance), but devotees of Lord Ram should not be worried, for they have the support and reliance of the Lord's powerful Holy Name that would always help them in their spiritual pursuit.

पाइ सुदेह बिमोह-नदी-तरनी न लही, करनी न कछू की।  
रामकथा बरनी न बनाइ, सुनी न कथा प्रह्लाद न धूकी।।  
अब जोर जरा जरि गातु गयो, मन मानि गलानि कुबानि न मूकी।  
नीकें कै ठीक दई तुलसी, अवलंब बड़ी उर आखर दूकी।।८८।।

88. pā'i sudēha bimōha-nadī-taranī na lahī, karanī na kachū kī.  
rāmakathā baranī na banā'i, sunī na kathā prahlāda na dhrūkī..  
aba jōra jarā jari gātu gayō, mana māni galāni kubāni na mūkī.  
nikēm kai ṭhika da'ī tulasī, avalamba baṛī ura ākhara dūkī..88..

Verse no. 7/88—In spite of getting (the rare opportunity of having) a human body, one did not obtain the boat of devotion to cross the river of attachments, and neither has one done any good deed.

The story of Lord Sri Ram was not sung properly (i.e. with due devotion, faith, belief, conviction) with the tongue, and neither did one hear with one's ears the devotional and inspiring life-stories of devotees such as Prahalad and Dhruva. [That is, when the body was young and able, the time was passed in futile pursuits of the world. The tongue was used to talk about the affairs of the world, and the ears were used to hear the things of the world.]

Now, the body has become totally useless and feeble due to ripe old age. In spite of all this, the mind has not abandoned its evil intentions and habits (and it continues to canter like a horse, here and there in every direction, leaving the old man harried and confused and devoid of peace which he yearns for).

[Even in old age when the body and its other organs become worn out and feeble, the wretched mind remains as active and lustful as it was during adolescent days or adulthood. It continues to wander here and there, never resting for a while. Even when an old man lies on the bed unable to attend to his daily needs, seeking physical help from his attendant, his mind remains agile like a wind—going to far off places and wondering in worlds of imagination. Tulsidas says this to emphasise that the mind is inherently and incessantly restless and fickle; it's the habit of the mind. So how do one control it? The answer is given below—]

In this scenario, Tulsidas has decided (determined) that the two letters of Lord Sri Ram's Holy Name, i.e. 'Ra' and 'Ma', are the only succour and relief for the heart. [That is, when no peace can be found due to the restlessness of the mind and its constant gnawing for fulfilling of this desire or regret for not fulfilling that, the only way to find peace, bliss and happiness is to invoke Lord Ram's Holy Name and prevail upon the sub-conscious to focus on it. This will remove all distractions. The mind cannot remain idle; it needs something to think of. If not channelled in the proper direction, it will heed to its natural habits and to the things it has been habituated or accustomed to—which is to run towards to thoughts of the world. But if a wise man gives it something to focus itself upon, which in this case is the thought of

Lord Ram's Holy Name, the mind will have something to do. And this will help one to rein-in the mind like an expert charioteer who controls the horse so that he can reach the destination without the horse toppling the chariot over by running amock here and there if it is not properly controlled.]

### Glory of Lord Rām's Holy Name

रामु बिहाइ 'मरा' जपतें बिगरी सुधरी कबिकोकिलहू की।  
नामहि तें गजकी, गनिकाकी, अजामिलकी चलि गै चलचूकी।।  
नामप्रताप बड़ें कुसमाज बजाइ रही पति पांडुबधूकी।  
ताको भलो अजहूँ 'तुलसी' जेहि प्रीति-प्रतीति है आखर दूकी।।89।।

89. rāmu bihā'i 'marā' japatēm bigarī sudharī kabikōkilahū kī.  
nāmahī tēm gajakī, ganikākī, ajāmilakī cali gai calacūkī.  
nāmapratāpa barēm kusamāja bajā'i rahī pati pāṇḍubadhūkī.  
tākō bhalō ajahūm' 'tulasī' jēhi prīti-pratīti hai ākhara dūkī..89..

Verse no. 7/89—By reciting Lord Ram's name in the reverse, the great poet Valmiki turned from a savage to a sage<sup>1</sup>. Gaja (the Elephant)<sup>2</sup> and Ganika (the harlot/prostitute)<sup>3</sup> got liberation/protection on the strength of Sri Ram's holy Name, and so was also the case with Ajamil<sup>4</sup>. Helpless Draupadi's<sup>5</sup> dignity and self-respect was maintained in Duryodhan's court only on the strength of Lord's name. [This refers to an episode from the epic Mahabharat.]

Tulsidas says that those who love and devote themselves to the two syllables 'Raa' and 'Ma' of His Lord's holy name, can have welfare, solace and succour here and now. (See also verse 88).

[Note—The glory, the greatness, the holiness and the spiritual importance of Lord Ram's divine Name has been elaborately laid out in (i) Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 19—to Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 28; (ii) Vinai Patrika, verse nos. 46, 64-70; and in our present book Kavita-wali, Uttar Kand, verse nos. 89-93, 178.

This verse primarily shows how Tulsidas sees his beloved Sri Ram everywhere, in all forms and in every incarnation, and regards all the various names of God as meaning the same word 'Ram'. Here, Draupadi had prayed to Lord Sri Krishna, but for Tulsidas there is no difference between Krishna and Sri Ram. Similarly, in stanza no 2, both the Elephant and Ajamil had called 'Narayan'—one of the many names of Lord Vishnu. But Tulsidas sees his Ram there also. This also goes to prove the 'oneness' of the various forms by which the Supreme Being is known and perceived. The Absolute Truth transcends all barriers which are essentially man-made, and these artificial barriers and constraints have nothing to do with the Divinity.

<sup>1</sup>Sage *Valmiki* is well known for his classical work known as the Ramayana, which is his magnum opus. He is also credited with penning Advhut Ramayan in which Sita had assumed the form of Maha Kali to kill the Ravana with a thousand heads.

It is said that he was a Brahmin by birth but brought up by robbers. So he adopted their lifestyle and ways for livelihood. Once the seven celestial sages known as the Sapta-Rishis went through the forest where he lived, and Valmiki accosted them. When asked by the sages why he robbed others, Valmiki replied that he did it to feed his family and other dependants. The sages advised him that they would not share the consequences of sins that he is committing for them. To test the correctness of this



advice, Valmiki tied them to a tree and went to his house to ask his kith and kin if they would share any misfortune that might befall upon him. When they replied that they are only concerned with what loot he brings home, Valmiki's eyes of wisdom opened instantaneously. He rushed back to the sages, untied them and fell at their feet seeking forgiveness. He asked them to show him the path by which he can seek redemption and salvation for himself. The sages then advised him to do Japa (repetition) with Lord Ram's holy Name 'RAAM'. Valmiki said that he was so sinful that it is not possible for him to utter the Lord's holy Name. At this, the sages thought over the matter and told him to repeat the name in the reverse order—as 'MARAA'. When this word MARAA is repeated it becomes RAAM. This trick worked fine for Valmiki, and he immediately sat down to do Tapa (severe form of penance) and meditated on the name of the Lord in the reverse order. He became so immobile and lost in contemplation that a mound of anthill formed around his body. It so happened that when the sages returned to the same place during their return journey, they saw him in this condition. They poured consecrated water on him and revived him. It was then that they gave him a new name 'Valmiki', which means 'one who has emerged from an anthill'. This story is narrated in Adhyatma Ramayan, Ayodhya Kand, 6/57-58.

<sup>2</sup>Gaja, <sup>3</sup>Ganika, <sup>4</sup>Ajamil—See note of Uttar Kand, verse no. 7 herein above.

<sup>5</sup>Draupadi—See Uttar Kand, verse no. 8 and its accompanying note.]

नामु अजामिल-से खल तारन, तारन बारन-बारबधूको ।  
नाम हरे प्रह्लाद-बिषाद, पिता-भय-साँसति सागरु सूको ।।  
नामसों प्रीति-प्रतीति बिहीन गिल्यो कलिकाल कराल, न चूको ।  
राखिहैं रामु सो जासु हिउँ तुलसी हुलसै बलु आखर दूको ।। 90 ।।

90. nāmu ajāmila-sē khala tārana, tārana bārana-bārabadhūkō.  
nāma harē prahalāda-biśāda, pitā-bhaya-sāmsati sāgaru sūkō..  
nāmasōm prīti-pratīti bihīna gilyō kalikāla karāla, na cūkō.  
rākhihaiṁ rāmu sō jāsū hi'ēm̐ tulasī hulasai balu ākhara dūkō..90..

Verse no. 7/90—The holy name of Lord Sri Ram can salvage the evil ones like Ajamil, and liberate those like Gaja (the elephant) and the prostitute (Ganika). It was the 'Name' that destroyed the sorrows of Prahalad<sup>1</sup>, and dried up (i.e. extinguished, eliminated) the ocean of fear and torments that his father (Hiranyakashipu) subjected him to. Those who do not have faith and love for the holy Name of Sri Ram are sure to be gobbled up by the terrible Kaliyug.

Tulsidas says that those in whose heart the strength of the two letters 'Ra' and 'Ma' arises, Lord Ram would surely and steadfastly protect them.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Prahalad—See Uttar Kand, verse no. 8 and its accompanying note.

Refer also to verse no. 7 and 89 of Uttar Kand herein above.]

जीव जहानमें जायो जहाँ, सो तहाँ, 'तुलसी' तिहुँ दाह दहो है ।  
दोसु न काहू, कियो अपनो, सपनेहुँ नहीं सुखलेसु लहो है ।  
रामके नामतैं होउ सो होउ, न सोउ हिउँ, रसना ही कहो है ।  
कियो न कछू, करिबो न कछू, कहिबो न कछू, मरिबोइ रहो है ।। 91 ।।

91. jīva jahānamēm jāyō jahām̐, sō tahām̐, 'tulasī' tihum̐ dāha dahō hai.  
dōsu na kāhū, kiyō apanō, sapanēhūm̐ nahīm̐ sukhālēsū lahō hai.  
rāmakē nāmatēm̐ hō'u sō hō'u, na sō'u hi'ēm̐, rasanā hīm̐ kahō hai.

kiyō na kachū, karibō na kachū, kahibō na kachū, maribō'i rahō hai.. 91..

Verse no. 7/91—Tulsidas says: 'Wherever a creature takes birth in this world, he keeps burning in the three Traitaps (Adhibhautik, Adhyatmik and Adidaivic). No one is to blame for it, for all this is the result of one's own deeds, and this is the reason why one doesn't find any happiness even in one's dreams. If anything good is ever expected, it would be only due to the good (positive) effects of Lord Ram's divine and holy Name, but the irony is that I don't take that Name with conviction in my heart. I chant it (mechanically, superficially) only from my tongue. [That is, though one chants the Lord's name by his tongue, his heart lacks faith and conviction. Obviously, this is like a half-hearted devotion, and the result would also be half of what is expected.]

Besides this, I have done nothing good till date, and shall not hope to do anything good in the future. I don't have anything more to say (as a justification for my assertions and observations). Now the only thing left to do is to die (out of shame).'

[Note—In this verse Tulsidas is admonishing others indirectly by addressing himself. He means to say that people suffer in this world inspite of apparently being doing the right things, being religious, repeating holy Mantras etc., but they are doing none of them sincerely and with honesty. They pretend to do things rightly but only till the time doing them rightly does not hurt them; they pretend to be religious because it makes them respected in society; they repeat the Mantras only to get some worldly gains and immunity from malignant stars or neutralize their negative effects. Then, even this repeating of the holy Name of the Lord is done mechanically—they are just doing it because they must do it, or because they have heard that by chanting this holy Name all their problems will be taken care of, and so on and so forth.

But this has no desired effect because they have no conviction, selfless devotion and love for the Lord; they have not submitted themselves completely to the Lord, but are repeating the Lord's name only to serve their interests. How then can they expect the full rewards that the Lord's holy and divine Name brings?]

जीजे न ठाउँ, न आपन गाउँ, सुरालयहू को न संबलु मेरें।  
नामुरटो, जमबास क्यों जाऊँ को आइ सकै जमकिंकरु नेरें॥  
तुम्हरो सब भाँति तुम्हारिअ सौँ, तुम्ह ही बलि हौ मोको ठाहरु हेरें।  
बैरख बाँह बसाइए पै तुलसी-घरु ब्याध-अजामिल-खेरें॥ 92॥

92. jījē na ṭhā'um̐, na āpana gā'um̐, surālayahū kō na sambalu mērēm̐.  
nāmuraṭō, jamabāsa kyōm̐ jā'um̐ kō ā'i sakai jamakiṅkaru nērēm̐..  
tumharō saba bhām̐ti tumhāri'a saum̐, tumha hī bali hau mōkō ṭhāharu  
hērēm̐.  
bairakha bām̐ha basā'i'ē pai tulasī-gharu byādha-ajāmila-khērēm̐.. 92..

Verse no. 7/92—I do not have any certainty of life. I do not have any village which I can call my own (I have no permanent abode or address), nor any arrangements to go to heaven. I have chanted Lord Ram's name, so how can I go to hell either? Which messenger of Yam can approach me in this state? [Since I have been chanting the holy Name of Ram, the messengers of Yam cannot catch hold of me].

I swear by you (Sri Ram)—by all counts, I am yours, and you are my only strength, succour and refuge. Hence, please accommodate Tulsidas in the same camp

as you had done the hunter Vyadh and Ajamil, and bring me under the protection of your arms by declaring me as one of your own.'

का कियो जोगु अजामिलजू, गनिकाँ कबहीं मति पेम पगाई।  
ब्याधको साधुपनो कहिए, अपराध अगाधनि में ही जनाई।।  
करुनाकरकी करुना करुना हित, नाम-सुहेत जो देत दगाई।  
काहेको खीझिअ, रीझिअ पै, तुलसीहु सौं है, बलिसोइ सगाई।। 93।।

93. kā kiyō jōgu ajāmilajū, ganikām' kabahīm mati pēma pagā'ī.  
byādhakō sādhipanō kahi'ē, aparādha agādhanī mēm hī janā'ī..  
karunākarakī karunā karunā hita, nāma-suhēta jō dēta dagā'ī.  
kāhēkō khījhi'a, rījhi'a pai, tulasīhu sōm hai, balisō'i sagā'ī.. 93..

Verse no. 7/93—'What Yoga did Ajamil do, and when did the whore (Ganika, Pingla) soak her mind in your (Sri Ram's) love and devotion? Say, tell me how saintly was the hunter (Vyadh) who was always seen committing heinous crimes. The virtues of graciousness, benevolence and magnanimity that are characteristics of Lord Sri Ram are naturally meant to be all-encompassing and all-accepting in as much as everyone can enjoy them, and no special qualities are required to benefit from them. If anyone tries to cheat you (Sri Ram) by chanting your name deceitfully (without devotion or sincerity), oh Sri Ram, why do you become angry at him (because, at least, he is chanting the purifying name, and secondly, how can he remain deceitful once he has pronounced your holy name)? Please have mercy on him. The same rule (as described above) applies to Tulsidas as well, and he sacrifices himself upon you expecting your mercy.' [Very clever, indeed!]

जे मद-मार-बिकार भरे, ते अचार-बिचार समीप न जाहीं।  
है अभिमानु तऊ मनमें, जनु भाषिहै दूसरे दीनन पाहीं ?।।  
जौं कछु बात बनाइ कहौं, तुलसी तुम्हमें, तुम्हहू उर माहीं।  
जानकीजीवन! जानत हौ, हम हैं तुम्हरे, तुम्ह में, सकु नाहीं।। 94।।

94. jē mada-māra-bikāra bharē, tē acāra-bicāra samīpa na jāhīm.  
hai abhimānu ta'ū manamēm, janu bhāśihai dūsarē dīnana pāhīm?..  
jaum kachu bāta banā'i kahaum, tulasī tumhamēm, tumhahū ura māhīm.  
jānakījīvana! jānata hau, hama hairm tumharē, tumha mēm, saku nāhīm.. 94..

Verse no. 7/94—"Those evil men who are full of taints and negative traits such as having pride, arrogance and haughtiness, as well as lust and yearnings—they don't have anything to do with positive qualities and the virtues of righteousness, probity, propriety and rightful conduct. This Tulsidas is no different, but he (Tulsidas) has this one single pride (which is worthy) in him, and it is that, excepting you (Sri Ram), he shall not beg or seek anything from anyone else (either men or any god).<sup>1</sup>

Tulsidas says, 'If I say anything which is wrong, untruthful and cooked-up, then I can't conceal anything from you (Lord Ram) since you reside in my heart and I in yours. Therefore, I can't hide anything from you. Oh Janki Jeevan (i.e. the dear Lord of Sita for whom Sri Ram is her life and soul)! You know it very well that I am yours and dwell in you (your heart)—there is no doubt about it.'<sup>2</sup>

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Tulsidas says that though he is like any other ordinary human being and has all the negative qualities typical of an ordinary person, but there is one difference. Others would spread their hands and seek from anyone who could fulfil their wishes, not considering whether the person before whom one spreads one's hands in asking, from whom anything is sought, is worthy of being asked for help as long as he satisfies one's desires. But Tulsidas is different on this count—for he may starve to death but he won't spread his hands before anyone, whether it be a human or a god, except before his beloved and revered Lord Sri Ram.

<sup>2</sup>This statement of Tulsidas refers to the eclectic philosophy of the Upanishads which stress on the one-ness of the individual soul known as the Atma with the supreme Soul of creation known as the Parmatma. It also emphasizes that Tulsidas knows that Sri Ram is the Supreme Atma, the Parmatma, living in his own heart as the Atma. He also knows that the Lord loves him very much because the former resides in the heart of Tulsidas. Only someone who is extremely dear to a person finds a place in his heart. Tulsidas' self-confidence and conviction that Sri Ram loves him and resides in his heart is very inspiring.]

दानव-देव, अहीस-महीस, महामुनि-तापस, सिद्ध-समाजी ।।  
जग-जाचक, दानि दुतीय नहीं, तुम्ह ही सबकी सब राखत बाजी ।।  
एते बड़े तुलसीस! तऊ सबरीके दिए बिनु भूख न भाजी ।  
राम गरीबनेवाज! भए हौ गरीबनेवाज गरीब नेवाजी ।। 95 ।।

95. dānava-dēva, ahīsa-mahīsa, mahāmuni-tāpasa, sid'dha-samājī..  
jaga-jācaka, dāni dutīya nahīm, tumha hī sabakī saba rākhata bājī..  
ētē barē tulasīsa! ta'ū sabarikē di'ē binu bhūkha na bhājī..  
rāma garībanēvāja! bha'ē hau garībanēvāja garība nēvājī.. 95..

Verse no. 7/95—'Demons, Gods, Sheshnath and other kings of serpents and men, great sages, those who perform penances and austerities, and mystics—every one in this world is a beggar or a seeker. There is no greater donor than you (Lord Sri Ram); you give success to all (fulfill their desires).

Oh Lord of Tulsidas! Though you are so great and exalted, you satisfied your hunger by eating already-tested plums offered to you by Sabari. [That is, you did not think that the plums are defiled because they had been bitten and tasted by Sabari earlier. You are so simple and down-to-earth; you have no airs about you; you do not have a trace of arrogance and hypocrisy in your behaviour. You gave precedence to the love the old lady have for you than being fussy about the plums not being fresh.]

Oh Lord Sri Ram, the sustainer of the wretched, the poor and the distressed! You have earned the title of the 'Protector of the Poor' by protecting them (so, live up to your reputation and protect me).'

किसबी, किसान-कुल, बनिक, भिखारी, भाट,  
चाकर, चपल नट, चोर, चार, चेटकी ।  
पेटको पढ़त, गुन गढ़त, चढ़त गिरि,  
अटत गहन-गन अहन अखेटकी ।।  
ऊँचे-नीचे करम, धरम-अधरम करि,  
पेट ही को पचत, बेचत बेटा-बेटकी ।  
'तुलसी' बुझाई एक राम घनस्याम ही तैं,

आगि बड़वागितें बड़ी है आगि पेटकी ॥ 96 ॥

96. kisabī, kisāna-kula, banika, bhikhārī, bhāṭa,  
cākara, capala naṭa, cōra, cāra, cēṭakī.  
pēṭakō paṛhata, guna gaṛhata, caṛhata giri,  
aṭata gahana-gana ahana akhēṭakī..  
ūm̐cē-nīcē karama, dharama-adharama kari,  
pēṭa hī kō pacata, bēcata bēṭā-bēṭakī.  
'tulasī' bujhā'i ēka rāma ghanasyāma hī tēm,  
āgi baṛavāgitēm baṛī hai āgi pēṭakī.. 96..

Verse no. 7/96—Labourers, farmers, traders and businessman, beggars, court singers and royal bards, servants, agile and expert (circus) artists, thieves, messengers, and a magician—all of them study for their stomach—i.e. they acquire education and respective skill to earn a living or feed themselves. They try all sorts of tricks, climb a mountain and roam in dense forests for prey—i.e. they can go to any extent to feed their stomachs or earn a livelihood. Everyone does good or bad deeds, adopt and follow righteous or un-righteous path to feed their stomachs—so much so that they even sell their own sons and daughters for it.

Tulsidas says that the fire stoked by hunger (of stomach) is greater (more irresistible and ferocious) than the fire of dooms-day; it can only be doused by the rain of dark clouds represented by the form (image) of Sri Ram. [Worldly needs have no end. Desire can never be satisfied. Devotion for Lord Ram and its attendant contentedness are the only remedy from the endless cycle of wants and desires.]

### Kaliyug

खेती न किसानको, भिखारीको न भीख, बलि,  
बनिकको बनिज, न चाकरको चाकरी ।  
जीविका बिहीन लोग सीद्यमान सोच बस,  
कहैं एक एकन सों 'कहाँ जाई, का करी ?'  
बेदहूँ पुरान कही, लोकहूँ बिलोकिअत,  
साँकरे सबै पै, राम! रावरें कृपा करी ।  
दारिद-दसानन दबाई दुनी, दीनबंधु!  
दुरित-दहन देखि तुलसी हहा करी ॥ 97 ॥

97. khētī na kisānakō, bhikhārīkō na bhīkha, bali,  
banikakō banija, na cākarakō cākārī.  
jīvikā bihīna lōga sīdyamāna sōca basa,  
kahaim̐ ēka ēkana sōm̐ 'kahām̐ jā'i, kā karī?'  
bēdahūm̐ purāna kahī, lōkahūm̐ bilōki'ata,  
sām̐karē sabai pai, rāma! rāvarēm̐ kṛpā karī.  
dārida-dasānana dabā'i dunī, dīnabandhu!  
durita-dahana dēkhi tulasī hahā karī.. 97..

Verse no. 7/97— (Tulsidas says): 'Oh Sri Ram! I swear by you—in the present time, the farmers can't have proper harvest, beggars don't get alms, traders don't succeed in business (their business runs in loss), and those seeking service (a job) can't get it. In this way, being deprived of any means of livelihood, they become agitated, distressed

and sorrowful, and tell each other 'what shall we do, where shall we go—there seems to be no solution'.

The Vedas and the Purans say, and it is also generally observed in this world, that you (Sri Ram) are the one who has helped all in times of troubles and needs. Oh friend of the distressed! The poverty in the form of Ravana has oppressed the world, and seeing the fire of sins all around, Tulsidas laments (and in all humility and sincerity asks you to help the people oppressed and tormented by misfortunes and evil times).'

[Note—Kaliyug—It has been described in Kavita-wali, Uttar Kand, verse nos. 83-88, and 97-105.]

कुल-करतूति-भूति-कीरति-सुरूप-गुन-  
जौबन जरत जुर, परे न कल कहीं ।  
राजकाजु कुपथु, कुसाज भोग रोग ही के,  
बेद-बुध बिद्या पाइ बिबस बलकहीं ॥  
गति तुलसीकी लखै न कोउ, जो करत  
पबब्यतें छार, छारै पबबय पलक ही ।  
कासों कीजै रोषु, दोषु दीजै काहि, पाहि राम !  
कियो कलिकाल कुलि खललु खलक ही ॥ 98 ॥

98. kula-karatūti-bhūti-kīratī-surūpa-guna-  
jaubana jarata jura, parai na kala kahīm.  
rājakāju kupathu, kusāja bhēāga rōga hī kē,  
bēda-budha bidyā pā'i bibasa balakahīm..  
gati tulasīkī lakhai na kō'u, jō karata  
pababyatēm chāra, chārai pabbaya palaka hīm.  
kāśōm kijai rōśu, dōśu dījai kāhi, pāhi rāma!  
kiyō kalikāla kuli khalalu khalaka hīm.. 98..

Verse no. 7/98—All people are burning (and destroying themselves in envy, jealousy and haughtiness) in the fire of the pride of their superior clan (and birth), their deeds, their fame/renown, their healthy and handsome body, their charm and beauty, their virtues and qualities, and their youthfulness—but there is no 'tap' available to douse this raging fire. [Tap refers metaphorically to a hydrant or any other source of water that can douse the fire represented by the negative traits listed above. In other words, this symbolic fire keep on burning inside all the creatures and burns them from within.]

This internal fire represented by the above negative qualities is like a disease that burns the creature from within. For this disease, the worldly deeds that one is forced to do as necessary part of life and the various pleasures of the sense organs that one enjoys are like food that is not supposed to be eaten by a sick person suffering from such a horrible disease. [When one is suffering from fever represented by the 'fire' and is sick with such negative signs of a serious 'disease' as mentioned in this verse, he must take complete rest and eat regulated and bland diet as prescribed by the doctor. If a man continues to work when suffering from fever, and eats things he is not supposed to eat, then surely he will suffer greatly.]

Remaining engrossed in the affairs of the mundane world just in order to feed the stomach or please one's worldly master, and being indulgent in different and myriad types of pleasures of the sense organs as well as remaining hooked to the

sense objects of this mundane and deluding world would only increase this disease, and no way reduce it.

Even those who have acquired the knowledge of the Vedas (i.e. are supposed to be enlightened and wise) lament and wail. [It means that not only the ordinary people are burning in the fire of ego, haughtiness etc. which is stoked by worldly duties and fanned by indulgences in the sense organs and materials of the world, but even those people who pride themselves in the knowledge of the Vedas are not spared—they have become wild with hypocrisy and arrogance too].

No one knows what Tulsidas' Lord Sri Ram can do—he can convert a mountain into a heap of rubble, and vice-versa, in a moment. Considering all this, who can be blamed and on whom should one become angry. This era of Kaliyug created turbulence (moral dilemma and social upheaval) in the entire world. So, Oh Sri Ram! Protect us! [Basically Tulsidas appeals to Lord Ram to help the people by lending them support to overcome the over-powering evil effects of the present era of Kaliyug which is dominated by negativity and delusions. Nothing worthwhile is achievable without the grace of Lord Ram.]

बबुर-बहेरेको बनाइ बागु लाइयत,  
 रूँधिबेको सोइ सुरतरु काटियतु है।  
 गारी देत नीच हरिचंदहू दधीचिहू को,  
 आपने चना चबाइ हाथ चाटियतु है॥  
 आपु महापातकी, हँसत हरि-हरहू को,  
 आपु है अभागी, भूरिभागी डाटियतु है।  
 कलिको कलुष मन मलिन किए महत,  
 मसककी पाँसुरी पयोधि पाटियतु है॥ 99॥

99. babura-bahērēkō banā'i bāgu lā'iyata,  
 rūm̐dhibēkō sō'i surataru kāṭiyatu hai.  
 gārī dēta nīca haricandahū dadhīchihū kō,  
 āpanē canā cabā'i hātha cāṭiyatu hai..  
 āpu mahāpātakī, ham̐sata hari-harahū kō,  
 āpu hai abhāgī, bhūribhāgī ḍāṭiyatu hai.  
 kalikō kaluśa mana malina ki'ē mahata,  
 masakakī pām̐surī payōdhi pāṭiyatu hai.. 99..

Verse no. 7/99—People have been so entangled or ensnared by Kaliyug (i.e. their wisdom and common sense has declined so much) that they plant useless trees of 'Acacia' and 'Baheer' (belleric-myrobalam), and to protect them, make a surrounding hedges (enclosures) using cut-down branches of the (most valuable tree known as the) 'Kalpa Tree' (which is the all wish-filling celestial tree of Gods).

People have become so evil and low (base, mean) that they even abuse (speak-ill) of Harischandra (the legendary king renowned for his truthfulness and adherence to duty) and Dadhichi (who sacrificed his bones for Indra to mould his invincible Vajra out of it to kill a demon). They eat all the grams in their hands and then lick their palms (to see if any residue is left over—i.e. they have become extremely greedy and impoverished). They themselves are great sinners but laugh at and deride Lord Vishnu and Shiva. They are luckless themselves, but out of jealousy and envy they admonish and scorn at those who are extremely lucky.

The effect of Kaliyug has made the minds of all very dark and ignorant so much so that they try to fill the vast ocean by the bones of dead mosquitoes! [What a ridiculous and incongruous state of affair, wonders Tulsidas. How stupid the people of the current generation have become. He means that the people have become so stupid that they have abandoned having devotion and love for Lord Ram, and instead spend their lifetimes pursuing the deluding world and its equally false charms and pleasures.]

सुनिए कराल कलिकाल भूमिपाल! तुम्ह,  
जाहि घालो चाहिए, कहौ धौ रखै ताहि को।  
हौं तौ दीन दूबरो, बिगारो-ढारो रावरो न,  
मैंहू तैंहू ताहिको, सकल जगु जाहिको॥  
काम, कोहू लाइ कै देखाइयत आँखि मोहि,  
एते मान अकसु कीबेको आपु आहि को॥  
साहेबु सुजान, जिन्ह स्वानहूँ को पछु कियो,  
रामबोला नामु, हौं गुलामु रामसाहिको॥100॥

100. suni'ē karāla kalikāla bhūmipāla! tumha,  
jāhi ghālō cāhi'ē, kahau dhaurṁ rākhai tāhi kō.  
haurṁ tau dīna dūbarō, bigārō-ḍhārō rāvarō na,  
mainhū tainhū tāhikō, sakala jagu jāhikō..  
kāma, kōhū lā'i kai dēkhā'iyata ām̐khi mōhi,  
ētē māna akasu kibēkō āpu āhi kō..  
sāhēbu sujāna, jinha svānahūm̐ kō pacchu kiyō,  
rāmabōlā nāmu, haurṁ gulāmu rāmasāhikō..100..

Verse no. 7/100—(Addressing Kaliyug, the present era dominated by evil, vices, pretensions, deceit and negativism, with immense sarcasm, Tulsidas calls it a 'Lord'—meaning great and powerful—and then says—) 'Oh Lord, the great and terrible Kaliyug! Listen. Who can be saved if you want to destroy him? I am a very poor and a wretched being, and I have not caused you any harm or offence. Both of us—you and me—belong to the same 'One' (God) who is the Lord of this entire world (creation). You have put lust, desire and anger to pursue me like a hound—say, who are you to scowl at me and have so much aggression towards me? My Lord Sri Ram is very wise (i.e. he knows everything), he had done justice to even a dog. I am a servant of such a munificent and benevolent Lord whose name is 'Ram', and that is why my own name is 'Rambola'<sup>1</sup>. [That is, I am closely identified by Lord Ram and inseparably belong to him so much so that I am called by a name with the Lord's name 'Ram' attached as a prefix.] Why will then Lord Ram not take my side (and protect me from your evil intentions, and do justice to me as well)?'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>*Rambola* was the name given to Tulsidas by the people when he went around begging for food when his parents died when he was very young. He used to call out 'Ram-Ram' during his rounds, and so the people gave him this nickname.]

साँची कहौ, कलिकाल कराल! मैं ढारो-बिगारो तिहारो कहा है।  
कामको, कोहको, लोभको, मोहको मोहिसों आनि प्रपंचु रहा है॥  
हौ जगनायकु लायक आजु, पै मेरिऔ टेव कुटेव महा है।  
जानकीनाथ बिना 'तुलसी' जग दूसरेसों करिहौ न हहा है॥101॥



101. sām̐cī kahau, kalikāla karāla! mair̐m ḍhārō-bigārō tihārō kahā hai.  
kāmākō, kōhakō, lōbhakō, mōhakō mōhisōm āni prapañcu rahā hai..  
hau jaganāyaku lāyaka āju, pai mēri'au tēva kuṭēva mahā hai.  
jānakīnātha binā 'tulasī' jaga dūsarēsōm karihaum̐ na hahā hai..101..

Verse no. 7/101—'Oh terrible and mischievous Kaliyug! Say truthfully, what harm have I caused you that you are giving me so much trouble? Was I the only one left for you to cast your net of lust, desire, anger, greed and allurements of attachments with the sole purpose of ensnaring me who is so humble and helpless? You are the Lord of the present world (present times) and are very able (resourceful). But oh Lord! It is my very bad habit that I too do not beg in front of anyone else except my Lord Sri Ram if I have to ask for getting protection. [So don't expect me to be servile before you; don't expect that your threatening overtures are going to cow me down and make me surrender before you. I will never surrender before anyone but Lord Ram. He is there to afford me protection, so I don't really care for you, remember!']

भागीरथी-जलु पान करौं, अरु नाम कै रामके लेत नितै हौं ।  
मोको न लेनो, न देनो कछू, कलि! भूलि न रावरी ओर चितैहौं ॥  
जानि कै जोरु करौ, परिनाम तुम्है पछितैहौ, पै मैं न भितैहौं ।  
ब्राह्मन ज्यों उगिल्यो उरगारि, हौं त्यों ही तिहारें हिउँ नहितैहौं ॥102 ॥

102. bhāgīrathī-jalu pāna karaum̐, aru nāma kai rāmakē lēta nitai haur̐m.  
mōkō na lēnō, na dēnō kachū, kali! bhūli na rāvarī ōra citaihaum̐..  
jāni kai jōru karau, parināma tumhai pachitaihai, pai mair̐m na bhitaihaum̐.  
brāhmana jyōm̐ ugilyō uragāri, haur̐m tyōm̐ hīr̐m tihārēm̐ hī'ēm̐  
nahitaihaum̐..102..

Verse no. 7/102—'I drink water from the holy river Ganges and take Ram's holy Name daily. Oh Kaliyug! I have nothing to do with you and will not look towards you even by mistake (i.e. don't imagine that I will even un-wittingly plead before you). If you willingly torment me and commit excesses, you shall repent for it. I won't be scared of you. Like Garuda (the mount of Vishnu) could not digest a Brahmin whom he had swallowed and had to vomit him out, I too would not get digested in your stomach (and you too would have to let me out). [It means that you cannot harm me in any way. So let me be alone!']

राजमरालके बालक पेलि कै पालत-लालत खूसरको ।  
सुचि सुंदर सालि सकेलि, सो बारि कै, बीजु बटोरत ऊसरको ॥  
गुन-ग्यान-गुमानु, भँभेरि बड़ी, कलपद्रुमु काटत मूसरको ।  
कलिकाल बिचारु अचारु हरो, नहिं सूझै कछू धमधूसरको ॥103 ॥

103. rājamarālakē bālaka pēli kai pālata-lālata khūsarakō.  
suci suṁdara sāli sakēli, sō bāri kai, bīju baṭōrata ūsarakō..  
guna-gyāna-gumānu, bham̐bhēri barī, kalapadrumu kātata mūsarakō.  
kalikāla bicāru acāru harō, nahim̐ sūjhai kachū dhamadhūsarakō..103..

Verse no. 7/103—The (foolish) people push aside the young ones of a swan and nourish those of owls; they collect and burn the best of cereals and (collect and) store

seeds for planting in the moor (barren field). [They destroy useful things and hoard worthless ones].

They are very proud of their knowledge and qualities; they cut the priceless Kalpa-Tree (which is an evergreen tree of gods that fulfills all desires) to make an ordinary wooden pestle or pounder. Kaliyug has stolen (eliminated, eclipsed, decimated) proper thoughts and behaviour; this is why the ignorant have become blind—i.e. they can't see what is good or bad for them.

कीबे कहा, पढ़िबेको कहा फलु, बूझि न बेदको भेदु बिचारै ।  
स्वारथको परमार्थको कलि कामद रामको नामु बिसारै ।।  
बाद-बिबाद बिषादु बढ़ाई कै छाती पराई औ आपनी जारै ।  
चारिहुको, छहुको, नवको, दस-आठको पादु कुकादु ज्यो फारै ।।104 ।।

104. kībē kahā, paḍhibēkō kahā phalu, būjhi na bēdakō bhēdu bicāraiṁ.  
svārathakō paramārathakō kali kāmada rāmakō nāmu bisāraiṁ..  
bāda-bibāda biśādu baṛhā'ī kai chātī parā'ī au āpanī jāraiṁ.  
cārihukō, chahukō, navakō, dasa-āṭhakō pāṭhu kukāṭhu jyōm phāraiṁ..104..

Verse no. 7/104—People do not understand the essential meaning (essence) of the Vedas, what duties they prescribe, and what the fruit of studying them is. They have abandoned the Kalpa Tree-like Sri Ram's holy Name which is the only way in Kaliyug that can serve one's self-interest as well as provide him with emancipation and salvation. They unnecessarily indulge in debates due to false pride of being highly knowledgeable (intelligent, educated), and enhance mutual animosity, envy and jealousy.

After studying the four Vedas, the six Shastras, the nine branches of Sanskrit grammar, and the eighteen Purans<sup>1</sup>, they have put the knowledge to naught like a man sawing a worthless piece of wood. [When a saw cuts through wood, it produces wood-dust. Similarly, these people cut through the tomes of knowledge contained in the voluminous scriptures only to produce worthless knowledge which is equivalent to dust, instead of using it for some constructive purpose].

[Note—<sup>1</sup>(i) The 4 Vedas are—Rig, Yajur, Sam and Atharva. (ii) The 6 Shastras are—Siksha, Vyakarna, Chandas, Nirukta, Jyotisa, Kalpa (these are also called Vedangas). (iii) The 9 Grammars are enunciated by and named after the following sages—Indra, Chandra, Kashkritasna, Shaktayan, Apishali, Panini, Amar, Jaynenra and Saraswati. (iv) The 18 Purans are—Brahama, Padma, Vishnu, Vayu, Bhagvata, Naradiya, Markandey, Agni, Bhavishya, Brahavaivarta, Linga, Varaha, Skanda, Vamana, Kurma, Matsya, Garuda and Brahamanand].

आगम, बेद, पुरान बखानत मारग कोटिन, जाहिं न जाने ।  
जे मुनि ते पुनि आपुहि आपुको ईसु कहावत सिद्ध सयाने ।।  
धर्म सबै कलिकाल ग्रसे, जप, जोग, बिरागु लै जीव पराने ।  
को करि सोचु मरै 'तुलसी', हम जानकीनाथके हाथ बिकाने ।।105 ।।

105. āgama, bēda, purāna bakhānata māraga kōṭina, jāhiṁ na jānē.  
jē muni tē puni āpuhi āpukō īsu kahāvata sid'dha sayānē..  
dharma sabai kalikāla grasē, japa, jōga, birāgu lai jīva parānē.  
kō kari sōcu marai 'tulasi', hama jānakīnāthakē hātha bikānē..105..

Verse no. 7/105—Vedas, Shastras and Purans narrate myriads of ways for salvation, and the sages and hermits call themselves Gods and Siddhas (the attained ones) as well as wise and enlightened.

All righteousness has been swallowed by Kaliyug, and all the Japs (chanting of the holy Mantras), Yoga (meditation) and Vairagya (renunciation, detachments) have run away for the fear of their lives (i.e. they have vanished). Tulsidas says that there is no use mourning for them. 'I (Tulsidas) have sold myself in the hands of Sri Ram.' [Tulsidas says that he has surrendered himself before Lord Ram, and therefore he is protected by the Lord himself. So, he has nothing to fear from.]

### Tulsidās' firmness of faith

धूत कहौ, अवधूत कहौ, रजपूत कहौ, जोलहा कहौ कोऊ।  
काहूकी बेटीसों बेटा न ब्याहब, काहूकी जाति बिगार न सोऊ॥  
तुलसीसरनाम गुलामु है रामको, जाको रुचै सो कहै कछु ओऊ।  
माँगि कै खैबो, मसीतको सोइबो, लैबोको एकु न दैबोको दोऊ॥106॥

106. dhūta kahau, avadhūta kahau, rajapūtu kahau, jōlahā kahau kō'ū.  
kāhūkī bēṭīsōm bēṭā na byāhaba, kāhūkī jāti bigāra na sō'ū..  
tulasīśaranāma gulāmu hai rāmakō, jākō rucai sō kahai kachu ō'ū.  
mām̐gi kai khaibō, masītakō sō'ibō, laibōkō ēku na daibēkō dō'ū..106..

Verse no. 7/106—'Whether anyone calls me a miscreant or a rascal, or an exalted and wise one, or even a Rajput (and upper class warrior, usually a king) or a weaver (a low caste man)—I don't need to marry my daughter to anyone's son nor do I intend to establish any relations with anyone. [So, why and how come I am expected to appease anyone and bother about what they say about me?]

Tulsidas is a famous slave (a devout follower, devotee) of Lord Sri Ram, so let anyone say whatever he thinks fit. I have to beg to feed myself, and sleep in a shrine. I do not have to take nor give anything from anyone.' [Hence, I don't bother about the people of the world, and what they say.]

मेरें जाति-पाँति न चहौं काहूकी जाति-पाँति,  
मेरे कोऊ कामको न हौं काहूके कामको।  
लोकु परलोकु रघुनाथही के हाथ सब,  
भारी है भरोसो तुलसीके एक नामको॥  
अति ही अयाने उपखानो नहि बूझैं लोग,  
'साह ही को गोतु गोतु होत है गुलामको'॥  
साधु कै असाधु, कै भलो कै पोच, सोचु कहा,  
का काहूके द्वार परौं, जो हौं सो हौं रामको॥107॥

107. mērēm jāti-pām̐ti na cahauṁ kāhūkī jāti-pām̐ti,  
mērē kō'ū kāmakō na hauṁ kāhūkē kāmakō.  
lōku paralōku raghunāthahī kē hātha saba,  
bhārī hai bharōsō tulasīkē ēka nāmakō..  
ati hī ayānē upakhānō nahi būjhair̐m lōga,  
'sāha hī kō gōtu gōtu hōta hai gulāmakō'..  
sādhu kai asādhu, kai bhalō kai pōca, sōcu kahā,

kā kāhūkē dvāra paraum̐, jō haum̐ sō haum̐ rāmakō..107..

Verse no. 7/107—'I have no caste and neither do I wish to find out about the caste of others. No one is of any use to me and neither do I wish to be of any use to others. My entire destiny (Lok-Parlok) and existence is in the hands of Lord Ram.

Tulsidas has the only reliance and succour in the name of Sri Ram. The people are utterly foolish—they do not understand that the 'Gotra' (race, caste) of the servant is the same as that of his master. I do not bother whether I am called a saint or not, or whether I am called good or bad. Whatever and howsoever I am, I belong to Sri Ram. Am I lying at the doorstep of anybody? Why are the people so much bothered about who I am, what my caste is, whether I am good or bad? Why don't they mind their own business?

[Tulsidas laments that the people are more concerned about which class of the society a person belongs to, or what his calling or status in the society is, or how learned he is, etc. Tulsidas wonders, 'How does it matter?']

If a man does not have devotion and love for Lord Sri Ram than his taking birth in a high caste, or being extremely successful in life by acquiring fame and money, or being very learned in the scriptures so much so that he might know them forwards and backwards—all these and such other achievements are null and void Tulsidas says that though he has none of the worldly achievements a man usually yearns for, he still considers himself extremely successful and fulfilled because he has sincere and abiding devotion and love for Lord Ram. For him nothing else matters.']

कोऊ कहै, करत कुसाज, दगाबाज बड़ो,  
कोऊ कहै रामको गुलामु खरो खूब है।  
साधु जानै महासाधु, खल जानै महाखल,  
बानी झूठी-साँची कोटि उठत हबूब है॥  
चहत न काहूँ न कहत काहूँ कछु,  
सबकी सहत, उर अंतर न ऊब है।  
तुलसीको भलो पोच हाथ रघुनाथही के  
रामकी भगति-भूमि मेरी मति दूब है॥108॥

108. kō'ū kahai, karata kusāja, dagābāja barō,  
kō'ū kahai rāmakō gulāmu kharō khūba hai.  
sādhu jānaim̐ mahāsādhu, khala jānaim̐ mahākhala,  
bānī jhūm̐thī-sām̐cī kōṭi uṭhata habūba hai..  
cahata na kāhūsōm̐ na kahata kāhūkī kachū,  
sarakī sahata, ura antara na ūba hai.  
tulasīkō bhalō pōca hātha raghunāthahī kē  
rāmakī bhagati-bhūmi mērī mati dūba hai..108..

Verse no. 7/108—'Some say that this fellow Tulsidas commits cheating, fraud and trickery etc., some say he is very disloyal and treacherous, while some others say that he is a truthful servant of Sri Ram. Saints know that I am a great saint, while miscreants recognise me as the greatest of rascals. There is a flood of numerous types of comments about me and my character—some true, others false. I do not want anything from any body, nor speak anything about anyone. I tolerate all with fortitude and forbearance, and have no ill-will or agitation in my mind against anyone. Tulsidas' welfare or harm is in the hands of his Lord Sri Ram. My wisdom is like

grass in the field of devotion for Sri Ram (i.e. the ultimate sustenance of my wisdom and intellect is in having sincere devotion for Lord Ram even as the ground or field is the sustainer of the grass).'

### Who is 'awake' in this world

जागैं जोगी-जंगम, जती-जमाती ध्यान धरैं,  
 डरैं उर भारी लोभ, मोह, कोह, कामके ।  
 जागैं राजा राजकाज, सेवक-समाज, साज,  
 सोचैं सुनि समाचार बड़े बैरी बामके ।।  
 जागैं बुध बिद्या हित पंडित चकित चित,  
 जागैं लोभी लालच धरनि, धन, धामके ।  
 जागैं भोगी भोग ही, बियोगी, रोगी सोगबस,  
 सोचैं सुख तुलसी भरोसे एक रामके ।।109 ।।

109. jāgair̥m jōgī-jaṅgama, jatī-jamātī dhyāna dharair̥m,  
 ḍarair̥m ura bhārī lōbha, mōha, kōha, kāmakē.  
 jāgair̥m rājā rājakāja, sēvaka-samāja, sāja,  
 sōcāir̥m suni samācāra baṛē bairī bāmakē..  
 jāgair̥m budha bidyā hita paṇḍita cakita cita,  
 jāgair̥m lōbhī lālaca dharani, dhana, dhāmakē.  
 jāgair̥m bhōgī bhōga hīm, biyōgī, rōgī sōgabasa,  
 sōvair̥m sukha tulasī bharōsē ēka rāmakē..109..

Verse no. 7/109—Yogis, Jangams (who have tied their male organs with a shackle), Sanyasis (those who have renounced the world; hermits) and those saints who move in groups—keep awake (alert) because on the one hand they meditate on the Lord God, and on the other hand they are very afraid of (the attacks of) lust, desires, anger, attachments, greed etc.

The Kings keep awake due to a variety of reasons—such as to attend to their royal duties regarding different works of the kingdom, their royal engagements, enjoyment of pleasures, calls for paying attention by the court-councilors, and to look after their vast property and realm. They also keep awake and alert because they are so worried about hearing of any news of big and powerful enemies who could attack them any time if they let their guard down.

Intelligent Pundits keep awake for studying; greedy persons for their land, wealth and homes; indulgent persons for the pleasures of the material world and sense-organs; and diseased persons and those who have been separated from their loved ones keep awake due to the agony of disease and separation.

But Tulsidas sleeps peacefully on the strength of Lord Ram because the Lord would protect him from any misfortunes. Tulsidas has reliance on Sri Ram, and so he has nothing to worry about, and is at complete peace with himself.

### Tulsidās' firm faith in Lord Rām

रामु मातु, पितु, बंधु, सुजन, गुरु, पूज्य, परमहित ।  
 साहेबु, सखा, सहाय, नेह-नाते, पुनीत चित ।।  
 देसु, कोसु, कुलु, कर्म, धर्म, धनु, धामु, धरनि, गति ।

जाति-पाँति सब भाँति लागि रामहि हमारि पति ।।  
 परमारथु, स्वारथु, सुजसु, सुलभ राम तेँ सकल फल ।  
 कह तुलसिदासु, अब, जब-कबहुँ एक रामते मोर भल ।।110 ।।

110. rāmu mātu, pitu, bandhu, sujana, guru, pūjya, paramahita.  
 sāhēbu, sakhā, sahāya, nēha-nātē, punīta cita..  
 dēsu, kōsu, kulu, karma, dharma, dhanu, dhāmu, dharani, gati.  
 jāti-pām̐ti saba bhām̐ti lāgi rāmahi hamāri pati..  
 paramārathu, svārathu, sujasu, sulabha rāma tēm sakala phala.  
 kaha tulasidāsu, aba, jaba-kabahum̐ ēka rāmatē mōra bhala..110..

Verse no. 7/110—'Lord Sri Ram is our parent, friend, kin, Guru (teacher, preceptor), revered and the greatest benefactor. The Lord is our Lord, a true friend and helper. Truly, all the relations of affection that exist are represented solely by Sri Ram. Our country, wealth, property, race/caste/clan, duties, homestead and destiny/fate are also Sri Ram. Our caste-clan and fame is Sri Ram. And all the fruits of good deeds done by us, as well as our salvation, welfare, good fame etc. are easily available to us by the courtesy of Sri Ram.'

Tulsidas says that either now or whenever in future, if any welfare is ever expected, then it can be expected only from Lord Ram, and from no one else.

[Note—It is to be observed here that in this as well as all the proceeding and preceding verses, the common strand is Tulsidas' unadulterated, supreme and determined allegiance, faith and devotion for Sri Ram. For him, everything else is of no significance and consequence.

Refer also to: Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 128—to Doha no. 131.]

### Prayers/Invocations

महाराज, बलि जाउँ, राम! सेवक-सुखदायक ।  
 महाराज, बलि जाउँ, राम! सुन्दर सब लायक ।  
 महाराज, बलि जाउँ, राम! सब संकट-मोचन ।  
 महाराज, बलि जाउँ, राम! राजीवबिलोचन ।।  
 बलि जाउँ, राम! करुणायतन, प्रनतपाल, पातकहरन ।  
 बलि जाउँ, राम! कलि-भय-बिकल तुलसिदासु राखिअ सरन ।।111 ।।

111. mahārāja, bali jā'um̐, rāma! sēvaka-sukhadāyaka.  
 mahārāja, bali jā'um̐, rāma! sundara saba lāyaka.  
 mahārāja, bali jā'um̐, rāma! saba saṅkaṭa-mōcana.  
 mahārāja, bali jā'um̐, rāma! rājīvabilōcana..  
 bali jā'um̐, rāma! karunāyatana, pranatapāla, pātakaharana.  
 bali jā'um̐, rāma! kali-bhaya-bikala tulasidāsu rākhi'a sarana..111..

Verse no. 7/111—Oh the Great Lord known as Sri Ram! You give happiness and peace to your devotees and those who serve you—I offer myself at your feet (to you)! [That is, I pray before you with the greatest of reverence.]

Oh the Great Lord Sri Ram! Oh the beauteous and all-able Sri Ram. I pray before you.

Oh the Great Lord Sri Ram! You can provide freedom from all troubles. I submit myself before you.

Oh the Great Lord Sri Ram who has lotus eyes! I revere and adore you.

You are the abode of mercy, protector of those who seek your refuge, and the remover (eliminator) of sins.

Oh Ram, keep Tulsidas under your protection because he is very agitated due to the fear of Kaliyug. I beg before you.

[Note :- ' bali jā'um' is a phrase having different connotations according to context. Hence different words have been used to express the hidden intent of the lines.

Refer also to Vinai Patrika, verse nos. 43-45, 47-48, 50-56, 64.]

जय ताड़का-सुबाहु-मथन मारीच-मानहर!  
मुनिमख-रच्छन-दच्छ, सिलातारन, करुणाकर!  
नृपगन-बल-मद सहित संभु-कोदंड-बिहंडन!  
जय कुठारधरदर्पदलन दिनकरकुलमंडन॥  
जय जनकनगर-आनंदप्रद, सुखसागर, सुषमाभवन।  
कह तुलसिदासु सुरमुकुटमनि, जय जय जय जानकिरमन॥११२॥

112. jaya tāṛakā-subāhu-mathana mārīca-mānahara!  
munimakha-racchana-daccha, silātārana, karunākara!  
nrpagana-bala-mada sahita sambhu-kōdaṇḍa-bihaṇḍana!  
jaya kuṭhāradharadarpadalana dinakarakulamaṇḍana..  
jaya janakanagara-ānandaprada, suhasāgara, suśamābhavana.  
kaha tulasidāsu suramukuṭamani, jaya jaya jaya jānakiramana..112..

Verse no. 7/112—Glory to you (Sri Ram)! You had destroyed the demons Tadka and Subhau, and had broken (crushed) the arrogance of Marich; you are an expert in protecting the fire sacrifice of sage Vishwamitra, you had liberated Ahilya who had been converted into a stone by a curse; you are a mine of mercy and kindness, and had broken the pride of Parashuram that he had conquered all the Kshatriya kings, along with the bow of Lord Shiva (at Janakpur).

Glory to you! You had crushed the pride and arrogance of Parashuram who carries an axe, and who is like an ornament (gem-like) in the Sun-race. Glory to you Sri Ram.

You gave happiness and joy to the city of Janakpur (i.e. to its inhabitants by marrying Sita). You are an ocean of extreme bliss, and an abode of splendour, magnificence and glory! Hail you, Sri Ram! Glory to you!

Tulsidas sings the glories and praises of Sri Ram, who is the crown jewel among Gods, and the most beloved of Sita. Glory to you! Glory to you!! Glory to you!!!

जय जयंत-जयकर, अनंत, सज्जनजनरंजन!  
जय बिराध-बध-बिदुष, बिबुध-मुनिगन-भय-भंजन!  
जय निसिचरी-बिरुप-करन रघुबंसबिभूषण!  
सुभट चतुर्दस-सहस दलन त्रिसिरा-खर-दूषण॥  
जय दंडकबन-पावन-करन, तुलसिदास-संसय-समन!  
जगबिदित, जगतमनि, जयति जय जय जय जानकिरमन॥११३॥

113. jaya jayanta-jayakara, ananta, sajjanajanaranājana!  
 jaya birādha-badha-biduśa, bibudha-munigana-bhaya-bhanjana!  
 jaya niscari-birūpa-karana raghubansabibhūśana!  
 subhaṭa caturdasa-sahasa dalana trisirā-khara-dūśana..  
 jaya daṇḍakabana-pāvana-karana, tulasidāsa-sansaya-samana!  
 jagabidita, jagatamani, jayati jaya jaya jaya jānakiramana!..113..

Verse no. 7/113—Hail and Glory to you (Sri Ram)! You had won Jayant (the son of Indra who had turned himself into a crow to test the ability of Sri Ram). You are endless (eternal, infinite), and a provider of bliss to all the saints.

Glory to you who had expertly killed the demon Viradh. Glory to you who are an eliminator of the fear of the Gods and the sages.

Hail and Glory to you! You had deformed the demoness Supernakha (by chopping off the nose and ears of), and you are the (ornamental) jewel of king Raghu's dynasty. You had destroyed the demons Khar and Dushan along with (their army of) fourteen thousand warriors.

Glory to you, who purified the Dandak forest and destroyed the doubts and confusions of Tulsidas. The renowned illuminator of the world—glory to you Sri Ram, the beloved of Sita! Hail, Hail, Hail!

जय मायामृगमथन, गीध-सबरी-उद्धारन!  
 जय कबंधसूदन बिसाल तरु ताल बिदारन!  
 दवन बालि बलसालि, थपन सुग्रीव, संतहित!  
 कपि कराल भट भालु कटक पालन, कृपालचित!  
 जय सिय-बियोग-दुख हेतु कृत-सेतुबंध बारिधिदमन!  
 दससीस बिभीषन अभयप्रद, जय जय जय जानकिरमन!।।114।।

114. jaya māyāmr̥gamathana, gīdha-sabarī-ud'dhāraṇa!  
 jaya kabandhasūdana bisāla taru tāla bidāraṇa!  
 davana bāli balasāli, thapana sugrīva, santahita!  
 kapi karāla bhaṭa bhālu kaṭaka pālana, kṛpālacita!  
 jaya siya-biyōga-dukha hētu kṛta-sētubandha bāridhidamana!  
 dasasīsa bibhīśana abhayaprada, jaya jaya jaya jānakiramana!..114..

Verse no. 7/114—Hail and Glory to you (Sri Ram)! You had killed Marich in the form of an illusive decoy golden deer, and you had liberated Jatau (the vulture) and Sabari (the low caste tribal woman).

Glory to you who killed Kabandh (the demon with a head-less trunk), and who pierced the tall coconut trees (by a single arrow). You had destroyed (killed) the strong Bali (the monkey), gave Sugriv the crown of Kiskindha, and are the benefactor of saints.

Glory to you! You are the merciful who protected and sustained the army of ferocious monkeys and brave bears. You had constructed a bridge after conquering the ocean so as to alleviate the sorrows of Sita, originating from her separation from you (Sri Ram).

Hail and Glory to you! Oh Sri Ram, the beloved of Sita. You had removed the fear of Ravana from the heart of Vibhishan. Glory to you! Glory to you!! Glory to you!!!



### The greatness of Lord Rām's Holy Name

कनककुधरु केदारु, बीजु सुंदर सुरमनि बर।  
 सींचि कामधुकधेनु सुधामय पय बिसुद्धतर॥  
 तीरथपति अंकुरसरूप जच्छेस रच्छ तेहि।  
 मरकतमय साखा-सुपत्र, मंजरिय लच्छि जेहि॥  
 कैवल्य सकल फल, कल्पतरु, सुभ सुभाव सब सुख बरिस।  
 कह तुलसिदास, रघुबंसमनि, तौ कि होइ तुअ कर सरिस॥115॥

115. kanakakudharu kēdāru, bīju sundara suramani bara.  
 sīñci kāmādhukadhēnu sudhāmaya paya bisud'dhatara..  
 tīrathapati āṅkurasarūpa jacchēsa raccha tēhi.  
 marakatamaya sākḥā-supatra, mañjariya lacchi jēhi..  
 kaivalya sakala phala, kalpataru, subha subhāva saba sukha barisa.  
 kaha tulasidāsa, raghubansamani, tau ki hō'i tu'a kara sarisa..115..

Verse no. 7/115—If Mt. Sumeru becomes a large vessel (a platter, a large dish or a crucible), the beautiful gem called Chintamani becomes the seed which is then watered by the purest milk of the Kamdhenu cow, and from it the king of all holy cities (i.e. Prayag, Allahabad) emerges like a bud (or germinates into a new plant) which is protected by God Kuber (the patron God of wealth) himself, and this sapling becomes a tree which has branches and leaves made of gems called Markat-Mani, its flowers are Goddess Laxmi personified herself, and its fruits are liberations from all types of bondages—even if such a rare and magnificent Kalpa Tree naturally rains (showers, bestows, gives, grants) all types of welfare and happiness, Tulsidas wonders that still (inspite of it), oh Sri Ram who is like a gem of Raghu's clan ('Raghu-bansa-mani'), can that Kalpa Tree ever compare itself to the glories and mystical powers that reside in your divine hands and rain or shower from them? (No they can't!).

[Tulsidas means that even the best of gifts and the best of giver of such gifts cannot match the graciousness, the benevolence, the magnanimity and the kind-heartedness of Lord Sri Ram. The Kalpa Tree is famed as the one which can give anything asked from it, but Tulsidas says that it is no comparison to Lord Ram's power to grant boons and give largesse. The fruits of this mythical Tree are no comparison with the amount and quality of gifts the Lord gives.]

### Who is Worthless?

जाय सो सुभटु समर्थ पाइ रन रारि न भडै।  
 जाय सो जती कहाय बिषय-बासना न छडै॥  
 जाय धनिकु बिनु दान, जाय निर्धन बिनु धर्महि।  
 जाय सो पंडित पढ़ि पुरान जो रत न सुकर्महि॥  
 सुत जाय मातु-पितु-भक्ति बिनु, तिय सो जाय जेहि पति न हित।  
 सब जाय दासु तुलसी कहै, जौ न रामपद नेहु नित॥116॥

116. jāya sō subhaṭu samartha pā'i rana rāri na bhaṇḍai.  
 jāya sō jāti kahāya biśaya-bāsanā na chaṇḍai..  
 jāya dhaniku binu dāna, jāya nirdhana binu dharmahi.

jāya sō paṇḍita paḍhi purāna jō rata na sukarmahi..  
 suta jāya mātu-pitu-bhakti binu, tiya sō jāya jēhi pati na hita.  
 saba jāya dāsu tulasī kahai, jaurā na rāmapada nēhu nita..116..

Verse no. 7/116—That able and brave warrior is useless who does not enter into combat even when the circumstances are favourable.

A hermit or an ascetic who, having renounced the world, does not abandon greed and desire for indulgences in pleasures of the sense organs, is also useless (as a hermit or ascetic).

A rich man who does not make charity and gives alms, and a poor who does not stick to the righteous and correct path are also worthless.

A Pundit (learned man) who does not follow the righteous path and does not do sanctioned deeds even after studying the Purans is equally worthless and in vain.

A son who does not respect his parents, and a wife who is not loyal and devoted towards her husband are similarly of no value.

Tulsidas says that, likewise, if one does not have love, affection, devotion, reverence and faith in the holy feet of Lord Sri Ram, then all else are useless, fruitless, futile and in vain for him.

### General Wisdom

को न क्रोध निरदह्यो, काम बस केहि नहि कीन्हो ?  
 को न लोभ दृढ़ फंद बाँधि त्रासन करि दीन्हो ?  
 कौन हृदयँ नहि लाग कठिन अति नारि-नयन-सर ?  
 लोचनजुत नहि अंध भयो श्रीपाइ कौन नर ?  
 सुर-नाग-लोक महिमंडलहुँ को जु मोह कीन्हो जय न ?  
 कह तुलसिदासु सो ऊबरै, जेहि राख रामु राजिवनयन ।।117।।

117. kō na krōdha niradahyō, kāma basa kēhi nahi kīnhō?  
 kō na lōbha dr̥ṣha phanda bām̐dhi trāsana kari dīnhō?  
 kauna hr̥dayam̐ nahi lāga kaṭhina ati nāri-nayana-sara?  
 lōcanajuta nahi andha bhayō śrīpā'i kauna nara?  
 sura-nāga-lōka mahimaṇḍalahum̐ kō ju mōha kīnhō jaya na?  
 kaha tulasidāsu sō ūbarai, jēhi rākha rāmu rājivanayana..117..

Verse no. 7/117—Who has not been burnt and tormented by anger? Who has not been conquered and overcome by lust, passions and desires? Whom has greed not ensnared and subject to torments? Whose heart has not been pierced by irresistible and enticing lustful glances of a woman? Which man has not become blind (inspite of having a pair of eyes) on having riches (i.e. who has not become haughty, arrogant, selfish, greedy, miserly etc. when he acquires wealth and prosperity)? In the three worlds—the heaven, the terrestrial and the subterranean—is there anyone who has not been won-over (conquered, overpowered, ensnared and bogged down) by attachments?

Tulsidas says that only those who are protected by the lotus-eyed Sri Ram can ever hope to escape from the above vices and snares.

[Note—Refer also to Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 70—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 71.]

भौंह-कमान सँधान सुठान जे नारि-बिलोकनि-बानतें बाँचे ।  
 कोप-कृसानु गुमान-अवाँ घट-ज्यो जिनके मन आव न आँचे ।।  
 लोभ सबै नटके बस है कपि-ज्यो जगमें बहु नाच न नाचे ।  
 नीके हैं साधु सबै तुलसी, पै तेई रघुबीरके सेवकसाँचे ।।118 ।।

118. bhaunha-kamāna samdhāna suṭhāna jē nāri-bilōkani-bānatēm bām̐cē.  
 kōpa-kṛsānu gumāna-avām̐ ghaṭa-jyōm̐ jinakē mana āva na ām̐cē..  
 lōbha sabai naṭakē basa hvai kapi-jyōm̐ jagamēm̐ bahu nāca na nācē.  
 nīkē hair̐ sādhu sabai tulasī, pai tē'i raghubīrakē sēvakasām̐cē..118..

Verse no. 7/118—Those who have escaped the arrows in the form of lascivious glances shot from the curved eyebrows of a beautiful woman, those whose mind had not been hard-baked like a mud pitcher in the oven of arrogance and pride by the fire of anger, and those who do not dance like a monkey to the tune of a monkey-charmer in the shape of greed and desires—Tulsidas says that only they are the true devotees and servants of Lord Sri Ram. Notwithstanding this, however, all saints are generally good and worthy.

[Note—Alternatively, this verse can be read as follows—“Those who have escaped the arrow symbolizing the lascivious glances shooting out from the bow-like curved eyebrows of a lustful woman, whose mind has not been burnt by the fierce fire symbolizing anger that is fanned by wind of arrogance, pride and haughtiness, and who do not dance like a pet monkey dancing to the orders of his master represented by Lobha (greed)—verily, Tulsidas asserts that such people are truly eligible to be called real servants and followers (devotees) of Lord Ram. Otherwise, all those who have good virtues and auspicious qualities in them are regarded as honourable and respectable (but they lack this special privilege of being called a true devotee of Lord Ram).”

In this context, refer to Doha no. 262 of the book ‘Dohawali’.]

### False (pretentious) Saints

बेष सुबनाइ सुचि बचन कहैं चुवाइ  
 जाइ तौ न जरनि धरनि-धन-धामकी ।  
 कोटिक उपाय करि लालि पालिअत देह,  
 मुख कहिअत गति रामहीके नामकी ।।  
 प्रगटैं उपासना, दुरावैं दुरबासनाहि,  
 मानस निवासभूमि लोभ-मोह-कामकी ।  
 राग - रोष - इरिषा - कपट - कुटिलाई भरे  
 तुलसी-से भगत भगति चहैं रामकी ।।119 ।।

119. bēśa subanā'i suci bacana kahair̐m cuvā'i  
 jā'i tau na jarani dharani-dhana-dhāmaki.  
 kōṭika upāya kari lāli pālī'ata dēha,  
 mukha kahi'ata gati rāmahikē nāmaki..  
 pragaṭair̐m upāsanā, durāvair̐m durabāsanāhi,  
 mānasa nivāsabhūmi lōbha-mōha-kāmaki.  
 rāga - rōśa - iriśā - kapaṭa - kuṭilā'īm bharē  
 tulasī-sē bhagata bhagati cahair̐m rāmaki..119..

Verse no. 7/119—Those people who are dressed like a saint (i.e. their external appearance resembles a holy person) and speak words that are deceptively sweet and pure like nectar, but desire, greed and attachment towards land, wealth and homestead have not left their hearts, those who adopt myriad of ways to take care of their bodies but say (falsely though) that they depend only on Sri Ram's name, those who make a show of their devotion and worship of God but hide their evil desires and inclinations within, and those whose mind has become an abode of greed, attachments, passions, lust and desires—Tulsidas wonders and expresses incredulity that even such people, who are full of attachments, anger, jealousy, deceit/fraud/falsehood and treachery, want to have devotion for Sri Ram.

[That is, it is impossible for such people having these evils in their hearts to have love and devotion for Sri Ram. It means that these evils have to be removed from the heart before Sri Ram can be attained].

[Note—(i) The eclectic grand virtues of true saints have been enumerated in the following scriptures:-

- (a) 'Adhyatma Ramayan' of sage Veda Vyas, Aranya Kand, canto 3, verse no. 37-39
- (b) Goswami Tulsidas' Ram Charit Manas, in the following assorted places—(i) Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 4-7 that precede Doha no. 2; (ii) Baal Kand, Doha no. 3 and Chaupai line nos. 5-12 that precede it; (iii) Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 7; (iv) Uttar Kand, Chanda line nos. 13-16 that precedes Doha no. 14; (v) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precede Doha no. 37, to Doha no. 38; (vi) Doha no. 46 and its preceding Chaupai line nos. 2-8 that precedes Doha no. 46.

(c) Goswami Tulsidas' Vairagya Sandipani—verse no. 8-33.

(d) In the Upanishads also, there are numerous instances when the eclectic qualities and grand auspicious virtues of saintly, holy and pious people are enumerated. Some of the examples are the following—(i) Shatayani Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, verse no. 19, 25; (ii) Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Cantos 1, Section 1-2; (iii) Sanyas Upanishad of Sam Veda, Canto 2, verse nos. 1, 55-57, 60; (iv) Jabal Darshan Upanishad of Sam Veda, Canto 1, verse nos. 4-6; Canto 2, verse no. 1; (v) Kaivalya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 2.

(ii) Similarly, the opposite characters of those who are non-saints, or who pretend to be saints but are crooks-in-disguise are enumerated in Ram Charit Manas as follows—

(a) In the words of Tulsidas—Baal Kand, Doha no. 4 and Chaupai line nos. 1-11 that precede it.

(b) In the words of Lord Ram himself—(i) Uttar Kand, Doha no. 39 with all its preceding Chaupai line nos. 1-8; (ii) Uttar Kand, Doha no. 40 with all its preceding Chaupai line nos. 1-8.]

### Boasting

कालिहीं तरुन तन, कालिहीं धरनि-धन,  
 कालिहीं जितौंगो रन, कहत कुचालि है।  
 कालिहीं साधौंगो काज, कालिहीं राजा-समाज,  
 मसक है कहै, 'भार मेरे मेरु हालिहै'॥  
 तुलसी यही कुभाँति घने घर घालि आई,  
 घने घर घालति है, घने घर घालिहै।  
 देखत-सुनत-समुझतहू न सूझै सोई,

कबहूँ कह्यो न कालहूँ को कालु कालि है ।।120 ।।

120. kālihīm taruna tana, kālihīm dharani-dhana,  
kālihīm jitaungō rana, kahata kucāli hai.  
kālihīm sādhaungō kāja, kālihīm rājā-samāja,  
masaka hvai kahai, 'bhāra mērē mēru hālihai'..  
tulasī yahī kubhāmṭi ghanē ghara ghāli ā'ī,  
ghanēm ghara ghālati hai, ghanē ghara ghālihai.  
dēkhata-sunata-samujhatahū na sūjhai sō'ī,  
kabahūm' kahyō na kālahū kō kālū kāli hai..120..

Verse no. 7/120—Fraudulent and cunning people boast—'I shall get a youthful body tomorrow (i.e. very soon), I shall receive land and wealth very soon, tomorrow I shall be victorious in battle, all my jobs will be done tomorrow, and I will be surrounded by a royal company and acquire regal surroundings and its attendant pomp and show tomorrow itself.'

In spite of being minuscule and non-entity like a mosquito, they boast that the huge Mt. Sumeru shall tremble due to their weight. Tulsidas observes that because of this bad habit of boasting, many a homes have been ruined in the past, are being ruined now, and shall be ruined in the future as well. This is because no one realises the futility of such loud-mouthed and boastful talk as Kaal (death) is also standing with wide-open mouth to devour all such people tomorrow. [People boast of so many things not realising the futility of it all. They don't realise the basic thing that life is but a bubble—it can burst any time. What to talk of tomorrow, it can burst the very next moment. So one should not boast in vain about tomorrow, and instead live life fruitfully in the present.]

### Humbleness of Tulsidās

भयो न तिकाल तिहूँ लोक तुलसी-सो मंद,  
निदैं सब साधु, सुनि मानौ न सकोचु हौं ।  
जानत न जोगु हियँ हानि मानैं जानकीसु,  
काहेको परेखो, पापी प्रपंची पोचु हौं ।।  
पेट भरिबेके काज महाराजको कहायौ  
महाराजहूँ कह्यो है प्रनत-बिमोचु हौं ।  
निज अघजाल, कलिकालकी करालता  
बिलोकि होत ब्याकुल, करत सोई सोचु हौं ।।121 ।।

121. bhayō na tikāla tihūm' lōka tulasī-sō manda,  
nindair̃ saba sādhu, suni mānauṃ na sakōcu hauṃ.  
jānata na jōgu hiyam' hāni mānair̃ jānakīsu,  
kāhēkō parēkhō, pāpī prapañcī pōcu hauṃ..  
pēṭa bharibēkē kāja mahārājakō kahāyōm  
mahārājahūm' kahyō hai pranata-bimōcu hauṃ.  
nija aghajāla, kalikālakī karālatā  
bilōki hōta byākula, karata sō'ī sōcu hauṃ..121..

Verse no. 7/121—'Past, present and future—there has been no wretched person like Tulsidas in the three periods of time and in all the three Lokas (the 3 worlds). All the

saints criticize him, but inspite of hearing everything, I do not mind. Even Sri Ram does not seem to consider him (Tulsidas) worthy; this is why he hesitates in his mind in accepting me (as his own). Why should I complain at this because actually I am a great sinner, deceitful, mean and lowly. I had identified myself with Lord Sri Ram for my own self interest (good) because the Lord has asserted that he gives salvation to all who seek his refuge.' But (inspite of the Lord's assertions) Tulsidas is very agitated seeing the wealth of sins that he has accumulated, as well as the wickedness and cunningness of Kaliyug, and he worries about the prospects of his emancipation and salvation.

### Banking on Rām's Gracious Nature

धर्म कें सेतु जगमंगलके हेतु भूमि-  
भारु हरिबेको अवतारु लियो नरको ।  
नीति औ प्रतीति-प्रीतिपाल चालि प्रभु मानु  
लोक-बेद राखिबेको पनु रघुबरको ।।  
बानर-बिभीषनकी ओर के कनावड़े हैं ।,  
सो प्रसंगु सुनें अंगु जरै अनुचरको ।  
राखे रीति आपनी जो होइ सोई कीजै, बलि,  
तुलसी तिहारो घर जायऊ है घरको ।।122 ।।

122. dharma kēm sētu jagamaṅgalakē hētu bhūmi-  
bhāru haribēkō avatāru liyō narakō.  
nīti au pratīti-prītipāla cāli prabhu mānu  
lōka-bēda rākhibēkō panu raghubarakō..  
bānara-bibhīśanakī ōra kē kanāvaṛē haim.,  
sō prasaṅgu sunēm aṅgu jarai anucarakō.  
rākhē rīti āpanī jō hō'i sō'ī kijai, bali,  
tulasī tihārō ghara jāya'ū hai gharakō..122..

Verse no. 7/122—The Lord God, who is like a bridge of Dharma (righteousness, probity, propriety and purity; everything that is holy and divine), had manifested himself in a human form for the welfare of the world as well as to remove the burden of unrighteousness and sins from the shoulder of the earth. It is the habit and natural inclination of the Lord to follow laws, regulations, affectionate relationships and righteous behaviour and conduct (to set an example for others). It is Lord Sri Ram's vow and a firm determination that he will keep the sanctity of the Vedas and other scriptures, as well as the established norms of behaviour and conduct in the world.

Hearing that the Lord even felt indebted to Sugriv and Vibhishan, this poor servant (Tulsidas) burns in jealousy (wondering why the Lord has not shown similar kindness and mercy on him).

[Lord Ram felt obliged to Sugriv for helping him find and recover Sita by putting the entire army of monkeys at the Lord's disposal, and in return the Lord made him the king of Kishkindha. Similarly, the Lord felt obliged to Vibhishan for seeking the Lord's shelter and helping him in the war with Ravana, who happened to be Vibhishan's own brother, so much so that the Lord made him the king of Lanka after the war was won. So Tulsidas says that the Lord must show the same degree of benevolence and grace upon him also because he too has surrendered himself before the Lord and goes about singing and praising the Lord's glory on this earth.

Actually and frankly speaking, this is indeed true. It is irrefutably due to Tulsidas that Lord Ram's name became so popular and so much loved and revered in every household of India. Tulsidas wrote in the local dialect so that the Lord's divine story could be accessed even by a layman, and he injected the nectar of devotion and love for the Lord in his writings that were missing earlier in all the other classical renderings of the story in the Vedas and the Purans and even in other versions of the Ramayana by other authors.]

Hence, 'I beg before you, you should keep in mind your reputation and character, and do for me whatever you can do or deem fit to do. This Tulsidas is your humble servant for all generations, from many previous births—so you must have special favour for him.'

नाम महाराजके निबाह नीको कीजै उर  
सबही सोहात, मैं न लोगनि सोहात हौं ।  
कीजै राम! बार यहि मेरी ओर चष-कोर  
ताहि लगि रंक ज्यों सनेह को ललात हौं ।।  
तुलसी बिलोकि कलिकालकी करालता  
कृपालको सुभाउ समुझत सकुचात हौं ।  
लोक एक भाँतिको, त्रिलोकनाथ लोकबस  
आपनो न सोचु, स्वामी-सोचहीं सुखात हौं ।।123 ।।

123. nāma mahārājakē nibāha nīkō kījai ura  
sabahī sōhāta, mairi na lōgani sōhāta hauri.  
kījai rāma! bāra yahi mērī ōra caśa-kōra  
tāhi lagi rañka jyōm sanēha kō lalāta hauri..  
tulasī bilōki kalikālakī karālatā  
krpālakō subhā'u samujhata sakucāta hauri.  
lōka ēka bhāmṭikō, trilōkanātha lōkabasa  
āpanō na sōcu, svāmī-sōcahīrī sukhāta hauri..123..

Verse no. 7/123—"Those who chant the Lord's Holy Name sincerely from their heart are respected and loved by the people, but the irony is that I (Tulsidas) am not liked by them. [It is a historical fact that the Brahmins and Pundits of Tulsidas' time were extremely jealous of him and hounded him out of envy. They left no stone unturned to defame him and ridicule him. Tulsidas' writings were stolen and even thrown in the river. In spite of such sensor by evil-minded and pervert people, Tulsidas persevered with his firm conviction and faith in the strength of the Lord, and his purest form of love and devotion for the Lord. The result was that while Tulsidas became immortal, his tormentors were lost in the sand of time.]

So oh Ram! At this moment of testing times, look at me with kindness. I am eager for your kind and merciful glance like an utterly poor man looks greedily at sweet food, and am eager for your grace, empathy and sympathy.' Tulsidas says further, 'Having considered both the ferocity and cruelty of Kaliyug's nature vis-à-vis the nature of the merciful and kind Lord (Sri Ram), I hesitate. In this age, the whole world appears to be the same—all (good or bad men) are criticizing me, and though you are the Lord of Triloki (the three worlds), you still have to be mindful of public opinion. But I am not worried about myself; I am more worried about you and your reputation.'

[Tulsidas means that though Sri Ram is ever so kind, merciful and benevolent, he is reluctant to extend this benefit to Tulsidas because the public opinion is against the latter, and the Lord has to keep the public in good humour because he is the King of the world and must take into consideration the opinion of his subjects. But, in doing so, the reputation of the Lord as being kind, merciful and benevolent is also suffering at the same time. Tulsidas is so clever—he indirectly and sarcastically admonishes his Lord for being late in taking care of Tulsidas; he provokes him and challenges him to take care of his servant Tulsidas inspite of the world criticizing him and plotting for his downfall!]

### True Devotee of Lord Rām

तौलौं लोभ लोलुप ललात लालची लबार,  
 बार-बार लालचु धरनि-धन-धामको ।  
 तबलौं बियोग-रोग-सोग, भोग जातनाको  
 जुग सम लागत जीवनु जाम-जामको ।  
 तौलौं दुख-दारिद दहत अति नित तनु  
 तुलसी है किंकरु बिमोह-कोह-कामको ।  
 सब दुख आपने, निरापने सकल सुख,  
 जौलौं जनु भयो न बजाइ राजा रामको ।।124।।

124. taulaurṁ lōbha lōlupa lalāta lālacī labāra,  
 bāra-bāra lālacu dharani-dhana-dhāmakō.  
 tabalaurṁ biyōga-rōga-sōga, bhōga jātanākō  
 juga sama lāgata jīvanu jāma-jāmakō.  
 taulaurṁ dukha-dārida dahata ati nita tanu  
 tulasī hai kiṅkaru bimōha-kōha-kāmakō.  
 saba dukha āpanē, nirāpanē sakala sukha,  
 jaulaurṁ janu bhayō na bajā'i rājā rāmakō..124..

Verse no. 7/124—Till the time Tulsidas becomes an open and declared servant (devotee) of Lord Sri Ram, he shall remain eager for bits and morsels of food; he shall be greedy, pervert and talkative; he shall repeatedly covet and be tempted by land, wealth and home etc.; he shall have the sorrows of separation and be suffering from various diseases; he shall be forced to undergo all types of torments and agonies; every moment would appear like a burden for him (i.e. his life would remain a burden for him); his body would burn (suffer) due to all sorts of agonies and poverty; and he shall remain a slave of passions, lust and desire, as well as of numerous attachments and anger.

Tulsidas says that till the time he does not become a devout devotee and servant of Lord Sri Ram, all the troubles and agonies that exist in this world would fall in his (Tulsidas') share, while all the happiness and comforts would belong to others.

[In essence Tulsidas says that all his misfortunes shall vanish as soon as he becomes a 'real' devotee of Sri Ram. Now, this again shows how humble he is. It is well known that he was the most ardent and loyal devotee of Sri Ram. So there is no question of his devotion being of a secondary quality or of falling in the second category. Secondly, he is also advising us indirectly by citing himself that we must abandon or leave all other means of seeking happiness and peace in this world, and



instead concentrate on the only and the easiest way to achieve it—and that is to have complete and total devotion towards Lord Sri Ram.]

[Note—Tulsidas raised his hands heavenwards, closed his eyes, brought his hands together in supplication and submission, bowed his head in humble devotion and prayed to his beloved Lord Ram as follows—

“Glory be to the Lord, the Living One, who dieth nought, and in whose hands is the dominion of the worlds, visible as well as the invisible.

Oh glorious Lord, there is no gainsaying thee in thine ordinance and thy dominion, neither wilt thou be questioned of that thou dost, for indeed thou art Almighty over all things. For indeed thou appointest unto thine creatures that which thou wilt, and that which thou hast foreordained unto them; wherefore art some weary and others art rest, and whereof art some enjoy fair fortune and affluence, whilst others suffer the extremes of travails and misery.

Glory to thee oh Lord: the Creator, the Provider, the Sustainer, the Protector and the Concluder. Verily I say sooth that oh Lord, thou art the One who providest one and all, whomso thou wilt and whoso prayeth to thee, without count and stint. Glory be to thee!

Oh mine Holy One! I fall at thy feet and cry thee for pardon of all sins, and turn to thee repenting of all offences.

Extolled by thy perfection: whom thou wilt thou makest richest and happiest, and whom thou wilt thou make poorest and unhappiest. Whom thou wilt thou exaltest, and whom thou wilt thou abasest, and there is no God nor Lord but thee, the Only, the Purest and the Holiest One!

How mighty is thy majesty and glory, and how enduring is thy dominion, and how excellent is thine governance of it!

Oh Lord Almighty and the Lord God! I suffer and begeth of thou to bless me and excuse me for my temerity that I saith what I saith, for verily it is sooth that toil, travails and lack of luck when the hand is empty, teach a man ill manners and boorish ways like that of mine, so I may be forgiven as I standeth before thee in humbleness, submitting mineself before thineself seeking thy protection and refuge.”]

तौलौं मलीन, हीन, दीन, सुख सपनें न,  
जहाँ-तहाँ दुखी जनु भाजनु कलेसको ।  
तौलौं उबेने पाय फिरत पेटौ खलाय  
बाय मुह सहत पराभौ देस-देसको ।  
तबलौं दयावनो दुसह दुख दारिदको,  
साथरीको सोइबो, ओढ़िबो झूने खेसको ।।  
जबलौं न भजै जीहँ जानकी-जीवन रामु,  
राजनको राजा सो तौ साहेबु महेसको ।।125 ।।

125. taulaur̥ṁ malīna, hīna, dīna, sukha sapanēm̐ na,  
jahām̐-tahām̐ dukhī janu bhājanu kalēsakō.  
taulaur̥ṁ ubēnē pāya phirata pēṭau khalāya  
bāya muha sahata parābhau dēsa-dēsakō.  
tabalaur̥ṁ dayāvanō dusaha dukha dāridakō,  
sātharīkō sō'ibō, ōḍhibō jhūnē khēsakō..  
jabalaur̥ṁ na bhajai jīham̐ jānakī-jīvana rāmu,  
rājanakō rājā sō tau sāhēbu mahēsakō..125..

Verse no. 7/125—Till the time a living being does not worship the holy and the divine Name of Sri Ram—who is the Emperor of kings and the Lord of Shiva—by way of remembering and chanting the Name with his tongue, he remains wretched, suffers from all sorts of wants, remains in darkness (i.e. remains ignorant), and distressed. He does not find happiness even in his dreams. Such a person is susceptible to agonies and torments.

Further, it is only till then that he has to wander everywhere barefoot, with out-stretched hands and an empty stomach (hungry and begging for morsels of food), and in the process suffer from grave insults, humiliation and reproach. He also remains afraid of abject poverty, and undergoes extreme troubles and sufferings—like sleeping on earth or on grass with straw as bed, and wear torn and tattered rugs.”

### Macrocosmic form of the Lord

(Lord Rām as the Virāt Puruṣh)

ईसनके ईस, महाराजनके महाराज,  
देवनके देव, देव! प्रानहुके प्रान हौ।  
कालहुके काल, महाभूतनके महाभूत,  
कर्महुके करम, निदानके निदान हौ।  
निगमको अगम, सुगम तुलसीहू-सेको  
एते मान सीलसिंधु, करुनानिधान हौ।  
महिमा अपार, काहू बोलको न वारापार,  
बड़ी साहबीमें नाथ! बड़े सावधान हौ।।126।।

126. īsanakē īsa, mahārājanakē mahārāja,  
dēvanakē dēva, dēva! prānahukē prāna hau.  
kālahūkē kāla, mahābhūtanakē mahābhūta,  
karmahūkē karama, nidānakē nidāna hau.  
nigamakō agama, sugama tulasīhū-sēkō  
ētē māna sīlasindhu, karunānidhāna hau.  
mahimā apāra, kāhū bōlakō na vārāpāra,  
barī sāhabīmēm nātha! barē sāvadhāna hau..126..

Verse no. 7/126—'Oh Lord, you are the Lord of Brahma and other Gods, the Emperor of kings, the God of gods, and the Soul of all souls. You are the Death of death, the greatest Mahabhut (the 5 elements-earth, water, fire, air and space), the best among deities, and the Cause of all causes. But though you are inaccessible for even the Vedas, you have made yourself easily available to an ordinary person like Tulsidas. In spite of your being so great, you are an ocean of noble virtues and a store of mercy. Your fame, greatness and grandeur are measureless; there is no beginning or an end of any of your words (utterances, such as Vedas, Purans and other scriptures etc.). But in spite of possessing such a great and magnificent grandeur and greatness, you are very careful about your reputation of taking care of your devotees (because even if a most humble soul surrenders himself to you, you make it a point to take proper care of him).

[Note—The 'Viraat Purush' form of the Lord, a form that incorporates everything in this creation and represents the Supreme Being's macrocosmic, all-pervading and all-

encompassing colossus form has been described on numerous occasions in Ram Charit Manas as follows—

(i) Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 54—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 55; from Doha no. 201—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 202; from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 54—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 55; Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 242.

(ii) Lanka Kand, from Doha no. 14—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 15.

(iii) Uttar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 80—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 81.]

### Greatness of Prahalād's Devotions

आरतपाल कृपाल जो रामु जेहीं सुमिरे तेहिको तहँ ठाढ़े ।  
नाम-प्रताप-महामहिमा अँकरे किये खोटेउ छोटेउ बाढ़े ॥  
सेवक एकतँ एक अनेक भए तुलसी तिहुँ ताप न डाढ़े ।  
प्रेम बढौप्रह्लादहिको, जिन पाहनतँ परमेस्वरु काढ़े ॥127॥

127. āratapāla kṛpāla jō rāmu jēhīm sumirē tēhikō taham̐ ṭhārḥē.  
nāma-pratāpa-mahāmahimā am̐karē kiye khōṭē'u chōṭē'u bārḥē..  
sēvaka ēkatēm ēka anēka bha'ē tulasī tihum̐ tāpa na ḍārḥē.  
prēma badaumprahalādahikō, jina pāhanatēm paramēsvaru kārḥē..127..

Verse no. 7/127—Lord Sri Ram is the protector of the distressed, the downtrodden and the humble creatures who have no other patron to take care of them. The Lord is a repository of mercy, compassion, kindness and benevolence. Whenever any one remembers him, he is there to help him (the caller) instantly.

The fame of the influence and effect of his Holy Name is very great and far-reaching, because it transformed evil, spoilt and corrupted persons into honoured and respected ones. It made even the most humble and lowly persons very big and great.

He has had numerous devotees and followers who were all 'one better than the other' (i.e. all of them had great fame and the eclectic qualities of one excelled that of the other so much so but it was difficult to distinguish between them), and none of them suffered from the tormenting affects of the three 'Traitaps' (Adhyatmik, Adhibhautik and Adidaivik).

But (Tulsidas says that—) I pay homage and respect to the love, devotion and faith of Prahalad which enabled him to manifest the Lord from a stone pillar (in the form of a man-lion incarnation of Lord Vishnu that is known as 'Narsingh God').

[Note—A brief story of what happened is given as a note of verse no. 8 of Uttar Kand of this book Kavita-wali. See also verse no. 128 below.]

काढ़ि कृपान, कृपा न कहँ, पितु काल कराल बिलोकि न भागे ।  
'राम कहाँ ?' 'सब ठाऊँ हैं', 'खंभमें ?' 'हाँ' सुनि हाँक नृकेहरि जागे ॥  
बैरि बिदारि भए बिकराल, कहँ प्रह्लादहिके अनुरागे ।  
प्रीति-प्रतीति बड़ी तुलसी, तबतँ सब पाहन पूजन लागे ॥128॥

128. kāḍhi kṛpāna, kṛpā na kahūm̐, pitu kāla karāla bilōki na bhāgē.  
'rāma kahām̐?' 'saba ṭhā'ūm̐ haiṁ', 'khambhamēm̐?' 'hām̐' suni hām̐ka

nr̥kēhari jāgē..

bairi bidāri bha'e bikarāla, kahēm prahalādahikē anurāgē.

pṛīti-pratīti baṛī tulasī, tabatēm saba pāhana pūjana lāgē..128..

Verse no. 7/128—The demon Hiranyakashipu drew his sword to kill Prahalad (his son), but though the former had no mercy in his heart, the latter did not run away seeing his father who resembled the terrible God of death in a personified form. And when he challenged Prahalad saying, 'Tell me where is your Ram?', the son replied, 'Everywhere!'. At this, the father asked him, 'Is he present in this stone pillar as well?', Prahalad replied, 'Yes, sure!'.  
Hearing his earnest conviction and urgent call, Lord Narsingh manifested immediately, destroyed Prahalad's enemy (his father), and became ferociously angry. Then, it was only after Prahalad prayed to him that he calmed down.

Tulsidas says—'This resulted in increased devotion and love of the people towards the Lord, and it is since then that the people started worshipping stones (idols).'

[Note—Tulsidas propounds that when it became known in the world that Prahalad had successfully made the Lord God reveal himself even from a stone pillar, the wise men of the time proposed that if an idol of the Lord God is made as an image of the form of the Lord that has been described in the scriptures and it is worshipped with due faith and conviction, then it would become easier for the masses and the ordinary people to relate to the Lord more easily and at a personal level.

This system of worshipping the Lord God—who is essentially invisible, formless and attributeless—by the medium of a visible form such as an idol would make it easier for the laity to develop devotion and faith in the Lord and find a way for their spiritual peace which was otherwise extremely difficult by the traditional method of metaphysical discourses or study of the scriptures, an opportunity that was however not available to the majority.]

### Saguna form of God

अंतरजामिहुतें बड़े बाहेरजामि हैं राम, जे नाम लियेतें ।  
धावत धेनु पेन्हाइ लवाई ज्यों बालक-बोलनि कान कियेतें ।।  
आपनि बुझि कहै तुलसी, कहिबेकी न बावरी बात बियेतें ।  
पैज परें प्रह्लादहुको प्रगटे प्रभु पाहनतें, न हियेतें ।।129।।

129. antarajāmihutēm baṛē bāhērajāmi hair̥m rāma, jē nāma liyētēm.

dhāvata dhēnu pēnhā'i lavā'ī jyōm bālaka-bōlani kāna kiyētēm..

āpani būujhi kahai tulasī, kahibēkī na bāvari bāta biyētēm.

paija parēm prahalādahukō pragaṭē prabhu pāhanatēm, na hiyētēm..129..

Verse no. 7/129—The Saguna of the Supreme Lord in the form of Sri Ram (the form of the Lord that was visible, had a specific form, attributes, characteristics and qualities like other visible entities of this creation, had a gross body that took birth and lived on earth like an ordinary human), is superior, greater and of more practical value than the Nirgun form of God (i.e. a form that has no attributes, that is formless, invisible, all-pervading, macrocosmic and subtle by nature)—because like a cow which has delivered a calf only recently starts lactating on hearing the cry of its young

one and rushes towards it, Sri Ram too comes rushing (to his devotees) on hearing his name being called out or remembered (by them)<sup>1</sup>.

Tulsidas says what he thinks is correct, because such apparently crazy and insane utterances are not meant for everyone (for all types of audience—for they would misinterpret things and create phantoms where none exist).

The Lord manifested himself from a stone (pillar) and not from anybody's heart when Prahalad had called out to him earnestly (to save him and to prove whatever Tulsidas says—that the Lord wastes no time in rushing to help his devotees when they call out to him, even revealing himself from an object where no one would believe the Lord is present)<sup>2</sup>.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The concept of 'Saguna God vis-à-vis Nirguna God' has been explained in Ram Charit Manas, (i) Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-3 that precede Doha no. 116; Chaupai line nos. 5-7 that precedes Doha no. 118; and (ii) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 3-6 that precede Doha no. 111.

How the Lord's Holy Name helps the devotee in times of need has been described in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 23—to Doha no. 25.

<sup>2</sup>This observation alludes to the all-pervading form of the Supreme Being. The Lord is present everywhere, even in the ordinary pillar from which he revealed himself as 'Narsingh' to protect his devotee Prahalad from his tormentor father. The point to underline is the intensity and sincerity of faith and conviction of the devotee: Prahalad had no doubt or second thought when he answered his angry father that the Lord was present in the pillar as well.

The remarkable thing is that the pillar was not an idol of any deity by any imagination, and Prahalad had not even invoked the Lord in the form he knew him to be in as Lord Ram or Lord Vishnu. The Lord revealed himself in a fierce form of a half-lion and half-man, the form known as 'Narsingh'. What does it signify? It means that when the devotee is in trouble and remembers the Lord, it is the Lord who decides how to reveal himself to protect the devotee and fulfil his obligation as the 'Protector of the meek and the humble'. No formalities or eligibility criteria is there to make the Lord come to the aid of his devotee except having the highest degree of faith and conviction on the part of the devotee.

Another point is that Prahalad was a mere child, and he was not expected to be learned in the scriptures. The only tool he knew by which to access his beloved Lord God was the Lord's Holy Name 'Raam'. But that was enough.

Tulsidas cites this particular instance to stress that in the present era of Kaliyug the only succour for the creature is the Lord's Holy Name 'Raam'. Refer also to Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Doha no. 103 ka.]

बालकु बोलि दियो बलि कालको कायर कोटि कुचालि चलाई।  
पापी है बाप, बड़े परितापतें आपनि ओरतें खोरि न लाई॥  
भूरि दई बिषमूरि, भई प्रह्लाद-सुधाई सुधाकी मलाई।  
रामकृपाँ तुलसी जनको जग होत भलेको भलाई भलाई॥130॥

130. bālaku bōli diyō bali kālako kāyara kōṭi kucālī calā'ī.  
pāpī hai bāpa, barē paritāpatēm āpani ōratēm khōri na lā'ī..  
bhūri da'īm biśamūri, bha'īm prahalāda-sudhā'īm sudhākī malā'ī.  
rāmakṛpām̐ tulasī janakō jaga hōta bhalēkō bhalā'ī bhalā'ī..130..

Verse no. 7/130—The coward Hiranyakashipu (father of Prahalad) tried all possible tricks and summoned the child Prahalad to sacrifice him to death. The father was a big sinner and very cruel, he did not leave anything to chance to harass and torment his own son Prahalad. He administered many poisonous herbs to him, but they became like the cream of nectar due to the saintliness of Prahalad.

Tulsidas says—by the mercy and benevolence of Lord Sri Ram, his servants (devotees) always have all types of welfare in this world (i.e. no harm can ever come to them).

### Reference to Lord Krishnā

कंस करी बृजबासिन पै करतूति कुभाँति, चली न चलाई।  
पंडूके पूत सपूत, कपूत सुजोधन भो कलि छोटे छलाई॥  
कान्ह कृपाल बड़े नतपाल, गए खल खेचर खीस खलाई।  
ठीक प्रतीति कहै तुलसी, जग होइ भले को भलाई भलाई॥131॥

131. kṁsa karī brjabāsina pai karatūti kubhām̐ti, calī na calā'ī.  
paṇḍūkē pūta sapūta, kapūta sujōdhana bhō kali chōṭō chalā'ī..  
kāṁha kṛpāla baṛē natapāla, ga'e khala khēcara khīsa khalā'ī.  
ṭhīka pratīti kahai tulasī, jaga hō'i bhalē kō bhalā'ī bhalā'ī..131..

Verse no. 7/131—King Kansa (of Mathura; the maternal uncle of Lord Krishna) had done terrible deeds to harass and torment the residents of Braj (the native place of Lord Krishna; the area around Mathura and Vrindavan), but all his tricks and misdeeds failed.

Pandu's sons Yudhisthir and others (i.e. the five brothers known as the 'Pandavas') were very saintly and righteous people, but Duryodhan (of the 'Kaurav' clan, the Pandavas' cousins who were a hundred in number) became a mini Kaliyug for them (i.e. he became a personified form of Kaliyug; their perpetual tormentor) because he used all sorts of treacherous acts, all sorts of trickery and deceit to rob them of their rightful share of the kingdom (and his evil mind was so pervert and sinful that he had no qualms even in attempting to de-clothe Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavas, in open court, something unimaginable even in today's evil world; and it was this incident that not only fuelled the bitter rivalry between the two clans but pushed it to reach its climax, leading to the famous war of Mahabharat).

(Even Duryodhan, like Kansa, tried his best to deceive them, torment them and cause their complete ruin, usurping their inheritance and rightful share of the kingdom, and driving them into wilderness and abject penury, but—) Lord Sri Krishna<sup>1</sup> is a great protector of those who seek refuge and shelter with him. [This refers to the Pandavas taking shelter with and help of Lord Krishna as opposed to the Kauravas who treated the Lord with utter scorn. The result was that the Pandavas won the war of Mahabharat and got their kingdom back, while the Kauravas, with their mighty army and all the war machinery of the great kingdom that they ruled at their disposal, were all killed one by one in the war.]

Hence, due to their own mischief and evil deeds, those rascals (the Kauravas) were destroyed like other demons such as 'Bakaasur'<sup>2</sup> (besides the cruel king of Mathura known as Kansa who was no less than a demon by his nature) who were killed by Lord Krishna during his earlier days in Vrindavan.

Tulsidas says that he speaks of only that thing in which he sincerely believes and is convinced about (for he is speaking from his heart and has no conceit in his mind whatsoever to mislead others by pretending to be a wise, saintly and righteous man). And this universal truth is as follows:--Those who are good by their inherent nature and follow the principles of righteousness, propriety, morality and ethical conduct as a matter of habit are always assured of their long-time welfare and good (because the Lord God will always protect them and take care of their interests no matter what odds are stacked against them and no matter how hard their opponents and tormentors try to harm them).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Lord Krishna is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu just like Lord Ram is. While Lord Ram was born in the 'Treta Yug', Lord Krishna was born in the era that followed it, known as the 'Dwapar Yug'. The story of Lord Krishna has been extensively detailed in Srimad Bhagwat Mahapurāṇ.

<sup>2</sup>The killing of the demon *Bak or Bakaasur*—The term 'Bak' has two meanings—one is a demon named Bakaasur, and the other is demon in the form of a crane. The story associated with this demon is briefly as follows—

(a) Bakaasur was a demon who lived near the small town of Ekacakranagar. He used to kill the residents of this town. So they reached an agreement with him that one human being would voluntarily go to him with other eatables, but the demons should not kill at random. When the Pandavas came to live here during their forest exile, they came to know of this curse, and Bhima, the strongest of the Pandava brothers, killed this demon. This rid the town of its menace. This story is narrated in Mahabharata, Aadiparva, 163.

(b) The demon Bak in the form of a crane—this story is mentioned in Bhagvata Maha Puran, Skanda 10, Canto 11, verse nos. 46-51. He was killed by Lord Krishna. It so happened that one day Lord Krishna, his brother Balraam and other companions had gone to a large water body to quench their own thirst as well as of their cows and calves. When they were in the process of drinking water, a great demon named Bakaasur, who lived in the water as a huge crane, immediately lunged forward and gulped down Krishna. When the Lord entered the demon's mouth, he began to scorch his palate and inner throat as if they were on fire. The demon became terrified and vomited Krishna out, but rushed forward to kill him. Then Lord Krishna caught hold of the demon's beak and tore it apart just like one tears a reed into two pieces.]

अवनीस अनेक भए अवनी, जिनके डरते सुर सोच सुखही ।  
मानव-दानव-देव सतावन रावन घाटि रच्यो जग माही ।।  
ते मिलये धरि धूरे सुजोधनु, जेचलते बहु छत्रकी छाँही ।  
बेद-पुरान कहैं, जगु जान, गुमान, गोबिंदहि भावत नाहीं ।।132 ।।

132. avanīsa anēka bha'e avanīm, jīnakē ḍaratēm sura sōca sukhāhīm.  
mānava-dānava-dēva satāvana rāvana ghāṭi racyō jaga māhīm..  
tē milayē dhari dhūri sujōdhanu, jēcalatē bahu chatrakī chāmhī.  
bēda-purāna kahaim, jagu jāna, gumāna, gōbindahi bhāvata nāhīm..132..

Verse no. 7/132—On this earth, there have been born many mighty and fierce Kings, so powerful and ruthless they were that their fear had struck terror in the minds of the Gods so much that the latter became emaciated by constant worry over their own security as they were extremely petrified at the very thought of annoying these Kings.

[That is, even the all-powerful Gods who ruled over the entire world and the heaven, and are usually regarded as being invincible, feared certain Kings over whom

their writ did not work. The Gods could control all others in this creation but not these Kings who did what they liked with impunity. If the Gods showed displeasure, these Kings even attacked the heaven and captured these Gods. Now, this statement obviously does not mean the good and righteous Kings of the world, for all of them had the greatest respect for the Gods and paid tributes to them by way of offerings and sacrifices. It refers to demonic Kings such as 'Kansa' in the case of Lord Krishna, and 'Ravana' in the case of Lord Ram. Both were mighty Kings, but were evil and sinful to the extreme. The Gods scampered for cover when they heard that these two were coming.]

To torment, inflict pain, harass and oppress others without any rhyme or reason, not only of ordinary men and exalted Gods but even members of their own race and community such as the other demons, and derive immense seductive pleasure by doing so—say, was Ravana (the blood-thirsty, viciously cruel and a tyrannical demon king of Lanka) not the chief or a leading example of such Kings? [That is, amongst all such haughty, evil and cruel Kings born in this world, Kings who left no stones unturned to torture other fellow beings and treated the Gods with utter loathe, Ravana was like their Emperor, the undisputed tormentor of the world and tyranny personified.<sup>1]</sup>

All of them including Duryodhan (of the Kaurav clan), who had many ceremonial umbrellas on their heads (representing their innumerable conquests, and symbolising their superior authority and power over other kings of the world, as the undisputed Emperors), perished in the dust of the earth. [It means that all these Kings and Emperors had thought that since even the Gods, including the God of Death known as Kaal, have been conquered by them and they dare not oppose their dictates, they had nothing to fear from anyone. So they became more and more tyrannical, evil, haughty, ruthless and cruel. But when the outer limit of tolerance was reached, the Supreme Being who is the ultimate Lord of the entire creation intervened personally and took charge of the situation. The Supreme Lord decided to end their evil reign and tyranny, and cut short their amock run and bludgeoning of the world. Hence, the Lord did what was necessary according to the prevailing circumstances, often revealing himself as one of the many incarnations. The manifestation of the Supreme Being in the case of Ravana was Lord Ram, and in the case of Duryodhan it was Lord Krishna.]

The Vedas and Purans say and the whole world knows that Sri Govind (Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Being) does not like pride, arrogance, haughtiness, hypocrisy and boast.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The mad and cruel run over the world by Ravana and the terror he unleashed has been vividly narrated in Ram Charit Manas, (a) Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 179—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 184.

How he had subdued the gods and held them captive has been described in Ram Charit Manas, (a) Sundar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 4, 8 that precede Doha no. 37; (b) Lanka Kand, Chaupai line nos. 2-4 that precedes Doha no. 8; Chaupai line nos. 1-8 that precede Doha no. 25.]

### 'Bhramar-Geet' / 'Uddhav-Gita'

जब नैनन प्रीति ठई ठग स्याम सों, स्यानी सखी हठि हों बरजी ।  
नहि जानो बियोगु—सो रोगु है आगें, झुकी तब हों तेहि सों तरजी ।।  
अब देह भई पट नेहके घाले सों, ब्यौत करै बिरहा—दरजी ।  
ब्रजराजकुमार बिना सुनु भृंग्! अनंगु भयो जियको गरजी ।।133 ।।



133. jaba nainana prīti ṭha'ī ṭhaga syāma sōm, syānī sakhī haṭhi haum̐ barajī.  
 nahi jānō biyōgu-sō rōgu hai āgēm̐, jhukī taba haum̐ tēhi sōm tarajī..  
 aba dēha bha'ī paṭa nēhakē ghālē sōm, byaunta karai birahā-darajī.  
 brajarājakumāra binā sunu bhr̥ṅg! anaṅgu bhayō jiyakō garajī..133..

Verse no. 7/133— [<sup>1</sup>After Sri Krishna had gone to Mathura, his close friend Uddhav came to Vrindavan to teach metaphysical philosophy and Yoga (meditation and concentration on the divine form of the Lord as well as the spiritual philosophy of dispassion, detachment and renunciation, as opposed to having the highest degree of devotion and love for him) to the Gopis—the cowherd maids who were ardent devotees and followers of Krishna. One such Gopi, speaking sarcastically and indirectly through the medium of a bumble-bee on behalf of her companions, replies to Uddhav as follows—]

'Oh Black-Bee (the bhr̥ṅg)! At the time when my eyes had established love and affection with this cunning, clever and playful boy known as 'Shyam-Sundar' (Lord Krishna, the beauteous and charming one with a dark-complexion), one of my wise friends had forcefully tried to stop me at that time. But however I was not aware then that in future this enchantment and love for Krishna will result in the disease (or agony) of separation. That is why I had become angry at her and had rejected her advice.

[Had I known at that time that my friend was correct, and that this love and enchantment with Lord Krishna would make me suffer the agony of separation from the Lord, I would have accepted her advice and would not have had got angry with her for making this suggestion. I had not then realised that it is not practical to be in constant company of Lord Krishna and become so enamoured of him that I would not like even an instant to go by without him, because one day he will become an adult and move out into the world to fulfil what has been written in his destiny. After all, Vrindavan was a small place, and Krishna had to move out into the world to make his mark and achieve success in whatever was destined for him by the Creator. He can't be expected to live his entire life in a small village, frolicking around with milk-maids, no boy is expected this!]

Now because of this latent disease, my body has is suffering a lot, being tormented and pierce by the agony of separation from the Lord just like a helpless piece of cloth is stitched and cut by a tailor (who does not undertand the pain that his merciless cutting and stitching is causing to the fabric).

[That is, just like a tailor is oblivious of the pain his scissors might be inflicting upon the cloth he cuts and stitches, this disease of separation is gnawing into my innards and cutting through my whole existence so much so that I have forgotten to eat, sleep, do my household chores etc. Verily, it has taken the form of chronic disease which has made me miserable.]

And, oh Bee, listen! Kaam (desire for being near to my dear Lord Krishna) has become a tormentor for me in the absence of that beloved prince (Lord Krishna) who was dear to all in the entire realm of 'Braj' (Vrindavan). [That is, it is not only me who am suffering from the agony of separation from Lord Krishna. It is the same thing for all the residents of this place.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The story of Uddhav going to Vrindavan and the narration of the 'Bhramar Geet' has been described in detail in Srimad Bhagwat Mahapuran, Skandha 10 (Purbardha), Cantos 46—47. While Canto 46 deals with Uddhav's journey to

Brindavan to meet the Gopis, Canto 47 narrates the 'Bhramar Geet' in almost the same language and spirit as Tulsidas has done here in Kavitawali.

The 'Bhramar Geet' describes how intensely the Gopis of Brindavan loved Lord Krishna. The obvious aim of Tulsidas in including this story in his own book Kavitawali which is centered on the theme of Lord Ram and not Krishna is to emphasise how one should have devotion for Lord Ram—it should be like the Gopis had for Krishna. These Gopis were not educated or learned in the scriptures; they were ordinary households of Brindavan. Uddhav was full of wonder about what special quality these ordinary ladies had that had so enamoured Lord Krishna that he could not forget them and always remembered them in his heart. So Krishna sent him to test their love for him first-hand and be convinced.

Likewise, Tulsidas advises us that we must also love Lord Ram like the Gopis loved Krishna if we wish that the Lord loves us like a caring parent, always eager not only to reciprocate our devotion and affection for him by showering his love, benevolence and love upon us but also going a step further and ensuring that no harm comes our way even if the 'Law of Karma' and 'Destiny' are infallible. That is, though it is true that one cannot escape from the consequences of the deeds one has done nor can one defy what has been written in his destiny by the Creator, yet it is also true that Lord Ram intercedes on the devotee's behalf and makes his sufferings miniscule and to the bare minimum, reducing the negative affects of the bad deeds to the minimum if it is not possible to completely obstruct or defer them while amplifying the positive affects of the good deeds so much so that the later almost eclipses the former and negates its residual effects. The Lord ensures that his loving devotee never feels uncared or lonely even if the whole world turns hostile against him and even if he has not studied any of the scriptures or pursued any of the spiritual pursuits except having the deepest and the sincerest of love and affection for the Lord.

Now, presently Krishna was not living with the Gopis, the childhood milk-maid friends of the Lord, at the time Uddhav arrived at Brindavan. The Gopis were feeling extremely heartbroken, desolate and inconsolable due the Lord's absence from amongst their midst. They were already suffering from the pain of separation from their beloved Lord Sri Krishna, and unfortunately just at this time Uddhav had come to teach them high principles of dry philosophy and spiritualism which only went to amplify their sufferings and appeared to rub salt on their wounds. The Gopis were expecting that Uddhav would give them the latest news of Lord Krishna—where he was, how was he doing, if he remembered them at all and what were his utterances about them, whether he was comfortable and ate well and slept well, and so on and so forth. Instead, Uddhav started preaching them.

So this Gopi vents her ire at him on behalf of all her companions and rebukes him when she says that the bug of love for Lord Krishna had already bitten her a long time ago, and now that bite has turned into a disease of sorrow and grief at being separated from her beloved Lord, making her feel absolutely lonely, desolate and inconsolable. The Gopi laments that at this juncture when she is overcome by her own miseries and sufferings and wishes to be left alone in quiet, this fellow Uddhav has come to teach her philosophy instead of finding a remedy for her disease. And what is that remedy? It is reunion with Lord Krishna. So, instead of finding her the medicine she needs to cure her disease and feel better, this chap Uddhav is giving her classroom lectures on spiritualism and metaphysics! What grave nonsense and joke is he playing on her?

The Gopi had surrendered herself to Lord Krishna and had mentally chosen the Lord as her life-time companion like all others who lived in Vrindavan. The Black-

Bee has a habit of humming even if no one is bothered about it and wish that it goes away or sit down somewhere quietly. But the Bee continues to hum and hum irritatingly. That is the reason the Gopi has chosen to address Uddhav as a Bee—for he lectures her and other Gopis though they do not want to hear his surmons, and would have liked that he either goes away or keeps quiet.

The ‘Bhramar Geet’ of Uddhav highlights the depth and sincerity of the surrender, love and affection that the Gopis naturally had for Lord Krishna, and it shows that pure devotion with its accompanying sense of total surrender, love and affection for the Lord is a far more effective, better and easier way of focusing the mind on the Lord and remembering him at all times which is also the aim of doing meditation and practicing contemplation but is difficult to implement by the latter methods. A devotee feels extremely close to the Lord, enshrining him in his or her heart, and remains lost in the thoughts of the Lord. The result is that the Lord also reciprocates by remembering the devotee at all times, feeling obliged towards him and always on the lookout for the devotee’s good and well-being. The distance between the devotee and the Lord is completely removed.

Therefore, loving and having affection for the Lord is a simpler and better method to focus the mind and heart on the Lord God than doing meditation and contemplation because once this love matures and reaches a climax, the devotee is completely possessed by the thoughts of the Lord, something which is the objective of meditation but is difficult to actually realise.]

जोग-कथा पठई ब्रजको, सब सो सठ चेरीकी चाल चलाकी ।  
ऊधौ जू! क्यों न कहै कुबरी, जो बरी नटनागर हेरि हलाकी ।।  
जाहि लगै परि जाने सोई, तुलसी सो सोहागिनि नंदललाकी ।  
जानी है जानपनी हरिकी, अब बाँधियैगी कछु मोटि कलाकी ।।134 ।।

134. jōga-kathā paṭha’ī brajakō, saba sō saṭha cērīkī cāla calākī.  
ūdhou jū! kyōm na kahai kubarī, jō barī naṭanāgara hēri halākī..  
jāhi lagai pari jānē sō’ī, tulasī sō sōhāgini nandalalākī.  
jānī hai jānapanī harikī, aba bām̐dhiyaigī kachu mōṭi kalākī..134..

Verse no. 7/134—‘Oh Uddhav! This message of Yoga (philosophy of meditation and contemplation) which has been sent to Braj through you must be the clever trick of that evil hunch-back maid servant (a reference to the maid of Kansa who was very crooked and jealous of the Gopis, so she wanted to deflect their thoughts away from Krishna).

Now, why will the deformed hunch-back not send us this message of philosophy to tease us because she is very fortunate as Sri Krishna has been gracious upon her and has decided to shower his grace and affection upon her?<sup>1</sup>

‘What is the fire of agony of separation?’—only those who burn from it can know about it. Today the hunch-back has become the favourite of the son of Nanda (i.e. Lord Krishna). How can she imagine about our agony?

[Krishna was in Mathura, and so the hunch-back had the opportunity to see the Lord as much as she wanted. But the Gopis longed for a view of the Lord which they won’t get any longer as the Lord had left Vrindavan. So this Gopi makes a sarcastic comment, saying that the hunch-back has been favoured by destiny that Krishna left Vrindavan and the Gopis behind to go to Mathura to oblige her, and therefore she, the

hunch-back, can't realise the sufferings of a person who is separated from his or her beloved.]

But today we have come to know how intelligent is Shyam-Sundar (Krishna) because he has preferred a deformed woman to show his affection and grace upon instead of the beautiful Gopis of Braj!

[This is obviously a sarcastic comment. The Gopi means that Krishna's choice of a hunch-back to show his affection instead of the beautiful ladies of Vrindavan shows that he lacks intelligence, good choice and grooming. Otherwise, which boy in his right senses would discard beautiful girls and go behind a physically deformed lady? The Gopi seems to make a taunt here, especially when she addresses Krishna as a 'son of Nanda' who was of the cowherd community. Cowherds are not expected to have the same good choices as, say, the princes and others born in a rich and well-groomed family have.]

Therefore, if having a hunch on the back seems to be so attractive to Krishna then we would also tie a bundle behind our backs from now onwards (so that we too look hunch-backed and draw Krishna's attention)!

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The story of Lord Krishna meeting the hunch-back maid of Kansa, known as 'Trivakraa' because she was bent at three places in her body, and obliging her has been narrated in detail in Srimad Bhagwat Mahapurāṇ, Skandha 10 (Purbardha) at two places—(a) Canto 42, verse nos. 1—12 which narrates how and under what circumstances Krishna met her, how he had cured her of her physical deformity by pulling her straight and transforming her into a lovely lady, and how she felt so happy and obliged that she had requested the Lord to visit her home so that she could serve him in the best way she can; and (b) Canto 48, verse nos. 1—10 where Krishna visits her at home, accepts her hospitality, makes her sit close, and obliges her in a general way by agreeing to stay with her for a few days while she showered her love and affection upon the Lord.

The Gopis are citing this incident here to Uddhav. The news had arrived in Brindavan by word-of-mouth through the Gopas (Krishna's cowherd friends). This news had upset the Gopis and they felt extremely remorseful and jealous because they had been thinking till now that Krishna would never have to do anything with any other woman except themselves. But they were totally ignorant of the reason why Krishna had gone to oblige the hunch-back as well as who they themselves were in their previous life. They felt that Krishna had found some shortcoming in them, for otherwise even after promising them life-long love why is he now showing affection for an old and deformed lady?

But it so happened that this hunch-back was Manthara in her previous birth during the time of Lord Ram. Manthara was the hunch-back maid of Kaikeyi, the step-mother of Lord Ram, who had instigated her mistress Kaikeyi to create a situation whereby Lord Ram goes to forest for 14 years and Kaikeyi's son Bharat is crowned the king of Ayodhya. Manthara had done this on the behest of the Gods because it was absolutely necessary that the Lord go to the forest so that the demons led by Ravana could be killed and the earth and its countless inhabitants as well the gods who had been tyrannised by the demons could find peace and freed from their tormentors.

But Manthara immensely regretted the role destiny forced her to play in the Lord's forest exile. She was full of lamentation and sorrow. She did not even had a chance to ask for forgiveness from the Lord, and suffered ignominy and shame for the rest of her life. Now, Lord Ram felt obliged to her because the Lord, who was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu as Krishna was, knew that Manthara had played the most

crucial role in helping him fulfil his obligation to liberate earth from its tormentor demons for which he had come down to earth from heaven. This is why he obliged the hunch-back in his next birth as Krishna to make her happy and overcome all her sorrows and regrets.

But the Gopis did not know this. They thought that Krishna found the hunch-back more attractive and charming than them because the Lord has shown exceptional grace upon the hunch-back.

Meanwhile, who were the Gopis? These consisted of two groups of women who had fallen in love with Lord Ram and wished to show their personal affection for the Lord but could not do so because of the 'Maryada' or the strict laws of personal and public conduct that were followed by all in the epoch of Treta-Yug when Lord Ram made his advent on earth. These two groups of ladies were: (a) those of Janakpur who were smitten by the beauteous and captivating sight of Lord Ram, the charming, pretty and friendly prince of Ayodhya who had come to Janakpur to attend the bow breaking and marriage ceremony of princess Sita, and had got subsequently married to her, and (b) the villagers on the wayside of Lord Ram's path from Ayodhya to the forest who were completely awed and captivated by the beautiful sight of Lord Ram walking dressed as a hermit along with his wife Sita and his brother Laxman as he wended his way along to the forest in the yonder. Both these groups of womenfolk had yearned in their hearts that if ever the Creator feels happy with them or wished to reward them for whatever little good they had done in their lives then let him destine in their destiny that in the next birth they can have close contact with Lord Ram and can show the Lord how much they loved him. Now, these Gopis were the same womenfolk, and Lord Krishna was Lord Ram in his next incarnation.]

पठयो है छपदु छबीलें कान्ह कैहूँ कहूँ  
 खोजिकै खवासु खासो कुबरी-सी बालको ।  
 ग्यानको गढ़ैया, बिनु गिराको पढ़ैया, बार-  
 खालको कढ़ैया, सो बढ़ैया उर-सालको ।।  
 प्रीतिको बधिक, रस-रीतिको अधिक, नीति-  
 निपुन, बिबेकु है, निदेसु देस-कालको ।  
 तुलसी कहै न बनै, सहै ही बनैगी सब  
 जोगु भयो जोगको बियोगु नंदलालको ।।135 ।।

135. paṭhayō hai chapadu chabīlēm kānha kaihūṁ kahūṁ  
 khōjikai khavāsu khāsō kubarī-sī bālakō.  
 gyānakō gaṛhaiyā, binu girākō paṛhaiyā, bāra-  
 khālakō kaṛhaiyā, sō baṛhaiyā ura-sālakō..  
 prītikō badhika, rasa-rītikō adhika, nīti-  
 nipuna, bibēku hai, nidēsu dēsa-kālakō.  
 tulasī kahēm na banai, sahēm hī banaigī saba  
 jōgu bhayō jōgakō biyōgu nandalālakō..135..

Verse no. 7/135—[The offended Gopi rebukes Uddhav and pours scorn on him when she minces no words to disparage him, and if the inference of what news he brings about Krishna, which implies that the Lord has preferred the ugly hunch-back over the Gopis is true, then the Lord himself, when she exclaims in exasperation—]

'The attractive and most beauteous Shyam-Sundar (Krishna) had searched here and there, and somehow managed to send this best and loyal servant of that lady (the hunch-back) in the form of the 'Black-bee'. [Here, Uddhav is compared to the black-

bee because the bee makes a continuous buzzing sound whether or not anyone is listening to it, and this sound emanates from the insect's wings and not from its tongue. So, as will be seen below, Uddhav is humiliated by the Gopi when she says that all that he utters are senseless guttural words spoken by someone who has lost his tongue, like the sound made by a bee who does not even know that its sound is irritating for others.]

He pretends to be a very wise man by crafting a lot many clever words of wisdom which he uses in his sermons. He talks without a tongue, makes a mountain out of a mole hill or tries to pull the skin out of the hair (i.e. indulges in senseless and useless debates and logic), and is the one who, thereby, enhances the agony of our hearts (by disturbing our peace).

He is the killer (or destroyer) of the glorious virtues of love and affection, especially a lover's undiluted affection towards her beloved. He is very expert in logic and debate, and is very wise and cunning. It is not his fault though, for it is the way of the world. [The world is ever jealous of true lovers and tries its best to throw a spanner in the wheel by sowing a seed of disenchantment and doubt in their minds. This fellow Uddhav has come here to try his tricks at us at the behest of his mistress, the ugly hunch-back of Mathura. He wants to oblige her by weaning us away from our unstinted and eternal love of Lord Krishna which the hunch-back is jealous of. And if by a remote chance he has come on the orders of Krishna then also it is high time for us to pay our beloved Lord in the same coin by turning ourselves away from him and giving him a cold shoulder when he gets fed-up with that hunch-back and wishes to come back to us!]

(Tulsidas says that therefore, as noted above, the Gopi changed her tone and continued—) Now there is no use in our (Gopis') saying anything; everything has to be tolerated. Now that our separation from Krishna is confirmed (as it is proved by the arrival of this crooked fellow who wants us to forget Krishna and focus our mind instead on some better spiritual options to get over our sorrowful state of affairs which is negatively affecting our health and life because it seems apparent that we are spending our time in futility in the thoughts of Lord Krishna who has meanwhile betrayed us by diverting his affection on a hunch-back crook at Mathura). So it seems that indeed it is high time for us to start practicing Yoga (renunciation and philosophy) instead of remaining drowned in the sea of grief of separation that love for Krishna has forced upon us!

### Prayer

हनुमान! है कृपाल, लाडिले लखनलाल!  
 भावते भरत! कीजै सेवक-सहाय जू।  
 बिनती करत दीन दूबरो दयावनो सो  
 बिगरेतें आपु ही सुधारि लीजै भाय जू॥  
 मेरी साहिबिनि सदा सीसपर बिलसति  
 देबि क्यों न दासको देखाइयत पाय जू।  
 श्रीझह्मे रीझिबेकी बानि, सदा रीझत हैं,  
 रीझे हैहैं, रामकी दोहाई, रघुराय जू॥136॥

136. hanūmāna! hvai krpāla, lāḍilē lakhanalāla!  
 bhāvatē bharata! kijai sēvaka-sahāya jū.  
 binatī karata dīna dūbarō dayāvanō sō

bigarētēṁ āpu hī sudhāri lījai bhāya jū..  
 mēri sāhibini sadā sīsapara bilasati  
 dēbi kyōṁ na dāsakō dēkhā'iyata pāya jū.  
 khījhahūmēm rījhibēkī bāni, sadā rījhata haiṁ,  
 rījhē hvaihaiṁ, rāmakī dōhā'ī, raghurāya jū..136..

Verse no. 7/136—'Oh Hanuman! Oh dear Laxman! Oh Bharat, who is dear to the heart! Be a little kind and help this servant (Tulsidas). This poor, weak and worthy-of-mercy servant prays to you—if he (Tulsidas) makes any mistakes in expressing himself, please correct it yourself.

My Goddess (Sita, the divine consort of Lord Ram) always stays above my head (i.e. my head is always bowed before her), so oh Goddess, why don't even you let this servant have a divine vision of your holy feet?

Our Lord (Sri Ram) is such that even when he appears to be angry, he is never so, for he is always happy, benevolent and pleased.

Hence I proclaim in the name of Lord Sri Ram and his gracious nature of not becoming angry at anyone at all that he must be pleased with Tulsidas at this moment also.'

[Note—Tulsidas expresses his humility and simple nature in this verse. He proclaims boldly that he is sure Lord Ram is pleased with him. But this boldness and surety may be lacking in etiquette and discipline as it is proclaimed without permission of Lord Ram. Say, how can a servant claim this right and declare that his Lord is always pleased with him even no matter what mistakes he makes without actually determining that it is so? Therefore, Tulsidas asks other close devotees and attendants of Lord Ram, such as Hanuman, Laxman and Bharat, and the Lord's consort Sita, to forgive him for this temerity and childishness. This is because his intention is good and in no way to impose anything upon the Lord or cause harm to his great reputation as the most gracious, the most kind-hearted and the most forgiving Lord of all.

Tulsidas says that he is declaring this even without the permission of the Lord as well as his closest attendants listed above so that the world may know that Lord Ram is so kind and gracious that he is eternally pleased with his stupid devotee named Tulsidas who does not even know good manners, so to say, by seeking his Lord's permission before making any declaration using the Lord's name as he is accustomed to making unilateral declarations regarding the Lord with impunity and without fear of punishment. This will only enhance the Lord's reputation instead of demoting it in any imaginable way!

The next verse elaborates upon this theme.]

बेषु बिरागको, राग भरो मनु माय! कहौं सतिभाव हौं तोसों।  
 तेरे ही नाथको नामु लै बेचि हौं पातकी पावँर प्राननि पोसों॥  
 एते बड़े अपराधी अघी कहुँ, तैं कहु, अंब! कि मेरो तूँ मोसों।  
 स्वास्थको परमास्थको परिपूरन भो, फिरि घाटि न होसों॥137॥

137. bēśu birāgakō, rāga bharō manu māya! kahaum satibhāva haum tōsōṁ.  
 tērē hī nāthakō nāmu lai bēci haum pātakī pāvamīra prānani pōsōṁ..  
 ētē barē aparādhī aghī kahum, taim kahu, amba! ki mērō tūm mōsōṁ.  
 svārathakō paramārathakō paripūrana bhō, phiri ghāṭi na hōsōṁ..137..

Verse no. 7/137—'Mother (Sita)! I tell you truthfully—my attire is like a person who is full of renunciation, but my mind is full of attachments. By virtually selling the name of your Lord (i.e. begging in the name of Lord Sri Ram), I nourish this sinful soul of mine (i.e. I sustain my life and body by using the name of Lord Ram—because people think I am a holy man when I use the Lord's name, and so they give me alms with which I support my stomach and daily needs of life, because otherwise I am so worthless that no one would give me anything and I would starve to death).

To such a big worthless fellow who is no less than a criminal and a sinner, oh mother, just tell him 'you are mine and are born of me (i.e. just tell me that I am your 'son' no matter how mischievous I am)'.  
'

[You know why I am making this odd request?] This will result in ensuring my welfare in this world as well as the next world (i.e. I shall get peace in this life as long as I live by getting your blessings, and I would be sure of salvation and ensure a good spiritual destiny for my soul when I die). Thereafter I shall not be wanting in anything.'

[Note—In this verse, Tulsidas has asked Sita, whom he knew to be Mother Goddess personified, to bless him. Now, if observed carefully we deduce one interesting thing here when we read verse nos. 136 and 137—Tulsidas is very sure of Lord Ram's grace upon him, but not so much about Sita. Lest she may feel side-stepped or neglected, Tulsidas especially dedicates these two verses to her. Remember: Tulsidas was a devotee of Lord Ram and not that of Mother Goddess. In Hinduism one is free to worship any form of the Supreme Divinity he or she likes—such as any one of the many forms that the same Supreme Being has taken in the form of so many Gods with different names, or the same Lord's dynamic Shakti has taken in the form of different Goddesses. It is all the same thing in the final analysis. An example will illustrate: a gallon of water filled in a hundred vessels of different makes, materials, sizes, designs and colours won't affect the fact that their content is nothing else but water though it assumes different shapes and colours while contained in a particular container. A sample of water in a blue glass container will look blue as compared to another glass of red colour, but does it actually change the colour of the water? Similarly, one gallon of water will always measure this quantity no matter what shape of the vessel it is put in—shallow, tall, flat, curved, contoured round or square, thick-walled or thin, glass or clay, a jar or a tub.]

### Description of Sitā-Vat (The Banayan tree named after Sitā)

जहाँ बालमीकि भए ब्याधतें मुनिंदु साधु  
 'मरा मरा' जपें सिख सुनि रिषि सातकी ।  
 सीयको निवास, लव-कुसको जनमथल  
 तुलसी छुवत छँह ताप गरै गातकी ।।  
 बिटपमहीप सुरसरित समीप सोहै,  
 सीताबटु पेखत पुनीत होत पातकी ।  
 बारिपुर दिगपुर बीच बिलसति भूमि,  
 अंकित जो जानकी-चरन-जलजातकी ।। 138 ।।

138. jahām' bālamīki bha'e byādhātēṁ munindu sādhu  
 'marā marā' japēṁ sikha suni riśi sātakī.  
 siyakō nivāsa, lava-kusakō janamathala  
 tulasī chuvata chāmḥa tāpa garai gātakī..



biṭapamahīpa surasarita samīpa sōhai,  
 sītābaṭu pēkhata punīta hōta pātākī.  
 bāripura digapura bīca bilasati bhūmi,  
 aṅkita jō jānakī-carana-jalajātākī..138..

Verse no. 7/138—The place where Valmiki was transformed into a holy saint from a hunter and killer by repeating the Lord's name (Ram) in the reverse order on the advice of the Saptrishis (the seven celestial saints), a place which was the abode of Sita (during her exile), and which was the birth place of (Sri Ram's two sons) Lava and Kush—Tulsidas says that that 'Vat' (Banyan tree) is situated on the banks of river Ganges. It looks magnificent and is called 'Sita-Vat'. [This is in the memory of Sita because it was under its shadow that she spent the last days of her life.]

The mere touch of its shadow cools down all the heat and temperature of the body in a symbolic manner. Even a sinner is converted to purity at the mere Darshan (divine, holy sight) of it.

[That is, it has become a pilgrim site of great value as it soothes the body and the mind, and gives peace to both. The 'heat and temperature' here stand for the various agonies, sufferings and torments that inflict a person during the present era known as 'Kaliyug'. By visiting this place and sitting or standing under the shadow of this holy Tree, the soul finds peace and the agitations of the mind subside as if a cooling balm has been applied on it. By saying that a sinner is ridden of his sins and becomes pure it is meant that this Sita Vat has the same religious importance and significance as any other holy pilgrim place.]

This place is located between the two villages of Varipur and Digpur (situated between Allahabad and Varanasi, and is famous by the name of 'Sita-Marhi').

It is marked (sanctified) by the footprints of Sita. [That is why it has been called after her as 'Sita Vat', or Sita's Banayan Tree.]

[Note—This 'Tree' has great significance as it was under its shade that sage Valmiki had done meditation by repeating the holy name of Lord Ram in the reverse and attained success by acquiring immense mystical powers, and so it was around this tree that he had established his hermitage. It was here that Sita found shelter when Lord Ram was forced to abandon her and send her to exile. It was in this hermitage of Valmiki where her two sons Lava and Kush were born, and it was under the shadow of this tree that the two boys grew up and learnt the story of the Ramayan from their mother Sita as well as their Guru sage Valmiki who was their foster-father.]

मरकतबरन परन, फल मानिक-से  
 लसै जटाजूट जनु रुखबेष हरु है ।  
 सुषमाको ढेरु कैधौ सुकृत-सुमेरु कैधौ,  
 संपदा सकल मुद-मंगलको घरु है ॥  
 देत अभिमत जो समेत प्रीति सेइये  
 प्रतीति मानि तुलसी, बिचारि काको थरु है ।  
 सुरसरि निकट सुहावनी अवनि सोहै  
 रामखनीको बटु कलि कामतरु है ॥139॥

139. marakatabarana parana, phala mānika-sē  
 lasai jaṭājūṭa janu rūkhabēśa haru hai.  
 suśamākō ḍhēru kaidhaurṁ sukrṭa-sumēru kaidhaurṁ,  
 sampadā sakala muda-maṅgalakō gharu hai..  
 dēta abhimata jō samēta prīti sē'iyē

pratīti māni tulasī, bicāri kākō tharu hai.  
surasari nikaṭa suhāvanī avani sōhai  
rāmaravanīkō baṭu kali kāmataru hai..139..

Verse no. 7/139—The leaves of that tree (Sita-Vat) are of greenish hue like a Markat-Mani (emerald), and the fruits are red like Manik (ruby).

Due to its extended branches and stilts, it resembles Lord Shiva's lock of hairs.

It appears to be a nucleus of beauty, a mountain (Sumeru) of good deeds, or else it is like an abode of all types of wealth, happiness, joys and auspiciousness.

If it is worshipped and serviced as a symbolic abode of Sita with firm belief and faith, then it provides all types of desired fruits. [That is, all the wishes of the devotee and the worshipper are fulfilled.]

This holy and beautiful place lies on the banks of river Ganges. This Tree of Sri Ram's beloved (wife) Sita is similiar to the Kalpa Tree (which is the all wish fulfilling celestial tree of the Gods) in Kaliyug.

देवधुनि पास, मुनिबासु, श्रीनिवासु जहाँ,  
प्राकृतहूँ बट-बूट बसत पुरारि हैं।  
जोग-जप-जागको, बिरागको पुनीत पीठु  
रागिन पै सीठि डीठि बाहरी निहारि हैं।।  
'आयसु', 'आदेस', 'बाबू' भलो-भलो भावसिद्ध  
तुलसी बिचारि जोगी कहत पुकारि हैं।  
राम-भगतनको तौ कामतरुतें अधिक,  
सियबटु सेयें करतल फलचारि हैं।।140।।

140. dēvadhuni pāsa, munibāsu, śrīnivāsu jahām,  
prākṛtahūṁ baṭa-būṭa basata purāri haiṁ.  
jōga-japa-jāgakō, birāgakō punīta pīṭhu  
rāgina pai sīṭhi ḍīṭhi bāharī nihāri haiṁ..  
'āyasu', 'ādēsa', 'bābū' bhalō-bhalō bhāvasid'dha  
tulasī bicāri jōgī kahata pukāri haiṁ.  
rāma-bhagatanakō tau kāmatarutēm adhika,  
siyabaṭu sēyēm karatala phalacāri haiṁ..140..

Verse no. 7/140—Even an ordinary Vat (Banyan) tree is said to be the abode of Lord Shiva, but this Vat (i.e. the 'Sita Vat') has additionally been blessed by its location near the holy river Ganges and the hermitage of sage Valmiki where Sita lived during her exile. [Hence, who can describe its spiritual importance, greatness, magnificence, significance and grandeur.]

This is a specially endowed place with mystical and magical powers which can bestow success in Yoga, Japa, Yagya and Vairagya (meditation, chanting of Mantras, sacrifices, penances and renunciation respectively).

For worldly people (who have no spiritual insight or inclinations) it appears to be an ordinary tree that is dry and withered (because they see only its physical aspect and are ignorant of its spiritual importance).

Tulsidas says that the local inhabitants of this place use courteous and pleasant words as a habit, such as saying 'as you please', 'order please', 'brother' etc. [As compared to other pilgrim places where the local priests and inhabitants have become

rude and exploitative, those who live in the vicinity of Sita Vat are very courteous and civil which is indicative of the influence this holy Tree has on its surroundings in a general way—making it peaceful and soothing for the senses.]

This Sita-Vat is of greater importance to the devotees of Sri Ram than even the Kalpa-tree because by serving it all the 4 fruits (which are ‘Artha’ or wealth and prosperity; ‘Dharma’—ability to follow the auspicious path of righteousness; ‘Kaam’—fulfilled desires; and ‘Moksha’—salvation) become easily available, whereas the Kalpa-tree can give only 3 fruits of Artha, Dharma and Kaam, but not Moksha.

### Description of Chitrakoot

जहाँ बनु पावनो सुहावने बिहंग-मृग,  
देखि अति लागत अनंदु खेत-खूँट-सो ।  
सीता-राम-लखन-निवासु, बासु मुनिनको,  
सिद्ध-साधु-साधक सबै बिबेक-बूट-सो ।।  
झरना झरत झारि सीतल पुनीत बारि,  
मंदाकिनि मंजुल महेसजटाजूट-सो ।  
तुलसी जौ रामसो सनेहु साँचो चाहिये तौ,  
सेइये सनेहसो बिचित्र चित्रकूट सो ।।141 ।।

141. jahām̐ banu pāvanō suhāvanē bihaṅga-mrga,  
dēkhi ati lāgata anandu khēta-khūṁṭa-sō.  
sītā-rāma-lakhana-nivāsu, bāsu muninakō,  
sid'dha-sādhu-sādhaka sabai bibēka-būṭa-sō..  
jharanā jharata jhāri sītala punīta bāri,  
mandākini maṅjula mahēsajaṭājūṭa-sō.  
tulasī jaum̐ rāmasōm̐ sanēhu sām̐cō cāhiyē tau,  
sē'iyē sanēhasōm̐ bicitra citrakūṭa sō..141..

Verse no. 7/141—[Verse nos. 141-143 describe the pristine beauty of the verdant forest known as ‘Chitrakoot’, literally meaning ‘one that captivates the mind’, where Lord Ram had tarried for sometime of the period of his forest exile after leaving the capital city of Ayodhya. Its beauty has been narrated by Goswami Tulsidas elsewhere also, such as in (a) Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, from Doha no. 132—to Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 139; (b) Vinai Patrika, verse nos. 23-24; (c) Geetawali, Ayodhya Kand, verse nos. 43-50.]

[Chitrakoot is the place—] (i) Where the verdant forest of pristine beauty is very pleasant, (ii) where the birds and animals are very enchanting, (iii) which gives immense joy to the beholder because it is like the lush green fields having fertile soil (that belong to a happy farmer who gets rich harvest from the land), (iv) where Lord Sri Ram, Sita (his wife) and Laxman (his brother) had lived (after leaving his capital city of Ayodhya during the first phase of the Lord’s 14 year of forest exile), (v) where many hermits, sages and saints live (even today), (vi) which is considered to be like a magical tree of wisdom for the mystics, sages, saints and spiritual seekers (as they derive immense pleasure and spiritual solace while living in this place as it has mystical powers which enable these holy men to attain their spiritual fulfilment easily), (vii) where cool and pure water that is crystal clear falls from the various

water-falls, (viii) and where the river Mandakini appears like the one that is entangled in the long lock of hairs on the head of Lord Shiva (i.e. it resembles river Ganges on the head of Shiva as it swirls around, gurgles, foams and froths in the midst of the surrounding mountains and hills).

[Hence, Chitrakoot represents Mother Nature as its best.]

Tulsidas says, 'If you sincerely want to have true devotion and affection for Lord Sri Ram, then serve (i.e. visit or reside in and imbibe the spiritual atmosphere of) this fascinating, serene and charming place known as 'Chitrakoot' with due faith, devotion and honour.'

मोह-बन-कलमल-पल-पीन जानि जिय  
साधु-गाइ-बिप्रनके भयको नेवारिहै ।  
दीन्ही है रजाइ राम, पाइ सो सहाइ लाल  
लखन समथ बीर हेरि-हेरि मारिहै ॥  
मंदाकिनी मंजुल कमान असि, बान जहाँ  
बारि-धार धीर धरि सुकर सुधारिहै ।  
चित्रकूट अचल अहेरि बैद्यो घात मानो  
पातकके ब्रात घोर सावज सँघारिहै ॥142॥

142. mōha-bana-kalimala-pala-pīna jāni jiya  
sādhu-gā'i-bipranakē bhayakō nēvārihai.  
dīnhī hai rajā'i rāma, pā'i sō sahā'i lāla  
lakhana samat'tha bīra hēri-hēri mārihai..  
mandākinī manjula kamāna asi, bāna jahām  
bāri-dhāra dhīra dhari sukara sudhārihai.  
citrakūṭa acala ahēri baiṭhyō ghāta mānō  
pātakakē brāta ghōra sāvaja samghārihai..142..

Verse no. 7/142—[A lot of metaphors or symbolisms are used in this verse to mean that the holy men who live here have been appointed by Lord Ram to keep vigil and a tight leash on the evil qualities that dominate in the era of Kaliyug. While all the perversions typical of Kaliyug have made their presence everywhere else, fortunately Chitrakoot has escaped their onslaught. It is still a pure and holy place like an oasis in a desert.]

In the forest known as 'Moha' (worldly delusions and attachments), there are wild and cruel (savage) animals who represent different vices, sinful conduct and all sorts of negativities (found in Kaliyug). These wild animals are getting their nourishment from, and thereby getting fatter by the day, by devouring and relishing the meat symbolising all the evils of Kaliyug.

[That is, those people who are dominated by evil characters and qualities relish the worldly life of Kaliyug. These people are submerged in worldly attachments and delusions which surround them from all sides like being in a thick forest. And since there is no dearth of evil and vices in this era, they get their fill, and finding these pursuits attractive and charming for the sense organs, they indulge in the negative things of the world like a hungry man devouring all that is put on his platter. Thus, they become more and more sinful and pervert in an incremental manner.]

Lord Ram realised this thing, so he ordered his younger brother Laxman to eliminate these aforesaid wild animals.

[Lord Ram was the Supreme Lord who had come down to earth to restore Dharma (laws of proper conduct leading to peace and happiness in the society) and thereby provide peace and happiness to his devotees as well as the hapless creatures who were feeling helpless against the ferocious onslaught of Kaliyug and its soldiers represented by these countless vices and sins which are here symbolised by the ‘wild animals of the dangerous forest’. Since the primary aim of the Lord in going to the forest was to eliminate the ‘demons’ who themselves represented the same set of vile characters and negative qualities that are personified as ‘wild cruel animals’ in this verse, the Lord decided to start his divine mission right from here—at Chitrakoot. Therefore, he ordered Laxman, his comrade-in-arm in this mission, to appoint warriors represented by the holy men who lived there so that the ordinary humble and docile creatures can find a place of solace and succour in the midst of a forest infested with cruel wild animals personifying the evils and vices of Kaliyug who have been tormenting them till now. This development has been clearly hinted at in Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Doha no. 134 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 5-8; and Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 142.]

Hence, having received the Lord’s orders, with the help of Laxman, ‘Chitrakoot’ (here, there is a play on the name of the forest; the word represents all the spiritual goodness of Chitrakoot as well as the devout, holy men who live here) is waiting for them (the savage animals, in the form of attachments in the sensual pleasures of the delusory materialistic world) in ambush like a careful and vigilant look-out (watch-man, sentry). ‘They’ (Chitrakoot as explained above, and Laxman) will search them out and kill each one of them, thereby removing the fear (of Kaliyug) from the heart of pious saints (representing good people and devotees of the Lord), holy cows (representing harmless animals and other simple non-human creatures) and Brahmins (the learned, respected class of people in the society).

For this purpose (as described herein above), ‘they’ (‘Chitrakoot’ and Laxman, the warriors appointed by Lord Ram) would use the beautiful river Mandakini as a magnificent bow and its water currents as the arrows (symbolising their weapons), and use them by their own hands (to do whatso is needed).

[The water of the river Mandakini has the same spiritual value as the water of river Ganges which is considered as the holiest river that has descended upon earth directly from heaven—see note of verse no. 145. While the latter emerged from the toe of Lord Vishnu and took abode on Shiva’s head, the former was used by Sri Ram, who was an incarnation of Vishnu, and the universal Shakti (Sita) for their daily use, including washing of their holy feet. So, it is no less potent in providing salvation than Ganges. This verse also shows that Tulsidas preferred the calm, serene and tranquility providing natural surroundings of Chitrakoot as a means of concentration on the Lord God and attaining peace and spiritual solace as compared to the noise, corruption, filth, congestion, and the hustle and bustle of pilgrim cities and their large temples. Infact, he treats ‘Mother Nature’ as his temple where he can worship his Lord Ram at peace, without external disturbances that are inherent to life in any so-called holy place such as a temple or a pilgrim town.]

### The ‘Forest Fire’ in Chitrakoot

लागि दवारि पहार ठही, लहकी कपि लंक जथा खरखौकी ।  
चारु चुआ चहुँ ओर चलैं, लपटैं-झपटैं सो तमीचर तौंकी ॥  
क्यों कहि जात महासुषमा, उपमा तकि ताकत है कबि कौं की ।

मानो लसी तुलसी हनुमान हिउँ जगजीति जरायकी चौकी ।।143 ।।

143. lāgi davāri pahāra ṭhahī, lahakī kapi laṅka jathā kharakhaukī.  
cāru cu'ā cahum̐ ōra calaim̐, lapaṭaim̐-jhapaṭaim̐ sō tamīcara tauṅkī..  
kyaum̐ kahi jāta mahāsuśamā, upamā taki tākata hai kabi kaum̐ kī.  
mānō lasī tulasī hanumāna hi'ēm̐ jagajīti jarāyakī caukī..143..

Verse no. 7/143— [Once there was a huge 'forest fire' in Chitrakoot. It was like Lord Ram using the ultimate remedy of 'burning every trace of evil to ashes' when the fire broke out in Chitrakoot. Why was this wrath of Lord Ram unleashed on Chitrakoot? Probably it was because in spite of the symbolism narrated in verse no. 142 where we have read that the Lord has ordered Laxman to take all necessary steps to ensure that the vices of Kaliyug do not touch Chitrakoot, the contrary actually happened when the era of Kaliyug arrived, and even the custodians of Dharma, the holy men, whom the Lord had appointed to be on the watch against the evil eye of Kaliyug themselves fell prey to its temptations.

The overpowering Kaliyug bulldozed its way into Chitrakoot, spreading its poisonous tentacles everywhere to corrupt those who lived there much as it had done at the other so-called holy places, such as pilgrim places and temples, in spite of the Lord's strict injunctions on it not to do so and be wary of its mischievous nature. So, the Lord became angry and cast this 'curse' by way of the fire that raged in Chitrakoot—to punish everyone in a symbolic manner just like plague and the pestilence that befall upon the earth to scour all creatures when the Lord becomes angry at them for the level of sins, vices and moral degradation that engulf and swamp the society.

In this verse, Tulsidas describes this fierce fire using the present tense in the narrative to imply that he was mentally there when it happened. He virtually witnessed it and is not basing his description on hearsay. This verse, when read with the earlier two verses, show that at the mental level, Tulsidas lived in Chitrakoot though physically he may have spent his time in Varanasi or elsewhere. It ought to be noted that while Lord Ram lived in the 'Tretayug', which was the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 4 Yug cycle, Tulsidas lived in the current era of Kaliyug against the evil designs of which verse no. 142 herein above is dedicated.

So the inference as noted in the first paragraph of this note—of Lord Ram cursing Chitrakoot with the curse of fire—is apparent as Tulsidas was dismayed and disgusted when he witnessed the level of mental and moral degradation and turpitude that had infected Chitrakoot at all levels, making it no different from the corruption prevalent at other so-called holy places.]

At this time, a ferocious wild forest fire is raging in Chitrakoot, and it is burning so wildly as if Lanka was being burnt by Hanuman.

Beautiful resident animals of the forest are running hither-thither in panic due to the intensity of the heat as when the demons had run in panic in Lanka on being scorched by the leaping flames. How can one describe the great awe-inspiring magnitude of the scene? [Tulsidas means the scene was horrific and most frightening.]

Trying to find out an equivalent or similar event to compare, the poet stands dumbfounded (because he could not think of any).

It appears that Hanuman is wearing a square medallion on his chest as a token of his conquering the world (i.e. ridding the world of all evils and vices).

[The question arises, ‘why would Hanuman burn Chitrakoot’? This alludes to the burning of Lanka by Hanuman and it signifies that whatever evil was present in Chitrakoot—remember, the present era is Kaliyug and this burning occurred in Kaliyug and not in the age of Sri Ram which was Tretayug—had to be destroyed so that the purity and sanctity of the place could be reinstated and resurrected.

This burning also perhaps shows symbolically that all holy places in Kaliyug have been engulfed in evil and unrighteousness, no matter how holy and sacrosanct they might have been in earlier ages. This is a veiled warning that Hanuman—the most righteous and incorruptible flag-bearer of Lord Sri Ram’s glory and promise to uphold Dharma—would not tolerate all this nonsense of Kaliyug. As Nature eliminates all scum with a single stroke of calamity such as earth-quakes, floods, lightening, epidemics, pestilence etc.—so does Hanuman by roasting them all alive by the ‘fire’. And ‘fire’ is a well considered choice—because whereas all other means of punishment indicated above do not purify but leave ugly scars and more problems in their wake, the ‘fire’ has the unique ability to burn impurities but spare what is pure and un-adulterated. For instance, when impure gold is put in fire, the impurity is burnt but not the pure metal; rather it is purified of its impurities. On the other hand, if there is chicken-pox, the whole body is scarred for life even after the disease abates and the patient recovers.

‘Fire’ can actually purify and is the ultimate test for purity. As an example, Sita had emerged unscathed from the fire during the fire-testing of her purity at Lanka after the war, whereas Holika, who tried to burn Prahalad in the same fire, was burnt to death, while Prahalad escaped unscorched.]

### Prayag/Triveni

देव कहैं अपनी-अपना, अवलोकन तीरथराजु चलो रे।  
देखि मिटैं अपराध अगाध, निमज्जत साधु-समाजु भलोरे॥  
सोहै सितासितको मिलिबो, तुलसी हुलसै हिय हेरि हलोरे।  
मानो हरे तन चारु चरै बगरे सुरधेनुके धौल कलोरे॥144॥

144. dēva kahair̥ apanī-apanā, avalōkana tīratharāju calō rē.  
dēkhi miṭair̥ aparādha agādha, nimajjata sādhu-samāju bhalōrē..  
sōhai sitāsitaṭkō milibō, tulasī hulasai hiya hēri halōrē.  
mānō harē tr̥ṇa cāru carair̥ bagarē suradhēnukē dhaula kalōrē..144..

Verse no. 7/144—[‘Prayag’, which is also known by the name of ‘Triveni’, is one of the more important pilgrim places of India. It is situated at the confluence of three holy rivers, viz. Ganges, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati which currently is said to flow underground, i.e. beneath the waters of the other two rivers and away from sight. Since it is a confluence of ‘three holy rivers’, it is deemed to be thrice blessed and three times more spiritually empowered as compared to other sites. It is called ‘Tirtha-Raaj’ or the ‘King of holy places’. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 105.

Lord Ram had visited this place en-route to the forest and had met sage Bharadwaj. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 106—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 109.

In the modern world it is recognised by the name of Allahabad which is a prominent city in central India. In ancient times, great sages, the most prominent one

being sage Bharadwaj, had their hermitages along the banks of these holy rivers at Prayag. Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 106.

The glories of Prayag has been lauded even by Lord Ram himself in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 105—till Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 106.]

The Gods speak among themselves, 'Come, let's go to have a Darshan (divine, holy seeing) of Prayag, the King among all the holy cities<sup>1</sup>. Big sins are decimated by the mere sight of this holy place, and many great saints bathe there (in its holy rivers)'.

Tulsidas says that the confluence of the rivers Ganges and Yamuna, whose waters are holy (auspicious) and dark in colour, look very magnificent. The heart feels euphoric seeing their currents which look like adorable young calves of the Kamdhenu cow, which are dark in complexion, grazing on the green grass here and there<sup>2</sup>.

[Note—The mythical Saraswati has not been mentioned. Actually, Prayag is also called Triveni, meaning the confluence of three rivers—viz. Ganges, Yamna and Saraswati. All these rivers are considered holy in Hinduism.

<sup>1</sup>Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 105.

<sup>2</sup>The colour 'green' mentioned in this verse obviously refers to the river Saraswati which flows as an undercurrent. The two other rivers, Ganges and Yamuna, are likened to the calves of the all wish fulfilling cow of the gods known as 'Kamdhenu'. In other words, this place is akin to the Kamdhenu cow for the purpose of fulfilling all spiritual aspirations of a seeker.]

### River Ganges

देवनदी कहँ जो जन जान किए मनसा, कुल कोटि उधारे।  
देखि चले झगरैँ सुरनारि, सुरेस बनाइ बिमान सँवारे॥  
पूजाको साजु बिरंचि रचैँ तुलसी, जे महातम जाननिहारे।  
ओककी नीव परी हरिलोक बिलोकत गंग! तरंग तिहारे॥145॥

145. dēvanadī kaham̐ jō jana jāna ki'ē manasā, kula kōṭi udhārē.  
dēkhi calē jhagaraiṁ suranāri, surēsa banā'i bimāna sam̐vārē..  
pūjākō sāju biran̐ci racaiṁ tulasī, jē mahātama jānanihārē.  
ōkakī nīva parī harilōka bilōkata gaṅga! taraṅga tihārē..145..

Verse no. 7/145—[Verse nos. 145—147 are dedicated to honouring the holy River Ganges.]

Any person, who has even as much as thought of taking a dip in the waters of the holy river Ganges, called the 'River of Gods'—'dēvanadī', has deemed to have liberated numerous generations of his family and clan.

When he starts on the journey towards Ganges, he becomes so respected and coveted that the Goddesses quarrel among themselves (to worship him first); the king of Gods, Indra, starts preparing his chariot to give him a lift, and Brahma, the creator



who is aware of its spiritual value and significance, begins to collect things needed to worship such a person.

Oh Ganges! Thou art so Great and Blesseth! As soon as the person views your holy currents, the foundation of his abode in the heaven is laid (i.e. his entry to the coveted heaven is ensured.)

[Note—River Ganges: The glories of river Ganges have been referred to in (i) Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-3 that precede Doha no. 212; and (ii) Vinai Patrika, verse nos. 17-20.

The legend about Ganges is as follows—

The story of the origin of the holy river Ganges is narrated in *Srimad Bhagwat Mahapuran*, Skandha 5, Canto 17, verse nos. 1-10.

It was contained in the Kamandalu (water pot) of Brahma, the creator. This is said in *Srimad Bhagwat Mahapuran*, Skandha 8, Canto 21, verse no. 4.

Then, its acceptance on the head of Lord Shiva where it was locked in the mat of thick hairs on the Lord's head is narrated in *Valmiki's Ramayan*, Baal Kand, Canto 42, verse nos. 23-25, and Canto 43, verse no. 1.

The story of why Bhagirath did Tapa to bring Ganges upon the earth is narrated in detail in *Valmiki's Ramayan*, Baal Kand, Sarga 38—44.

There is another version narrated in *Padma Puran*, *Srishi Khand*. Here, sage Veda Vyas, who was narrating the Puran to Brahmin audience, told the story of the origin and descent upon the earth of the holy river Ganges in detail when they asked him about it.

Briefly, the story of river Ganges is this: When Lord Vishnu had incarnated as Lord Vaaman, the dwarf mendicant, to crush the haughtiness of king Bali and prevent him from declaring himself the emperor of the entire universe, the Lord had expended his left foot so much that its toe nail had ruptured the outer shell of the galaxy, creating a hole. The inter-galactic river flowing outside the known galaxy gushed in through this hole to fill the whole space. When this celestial river touched the feet of Lord Vishnu, it turned reddish due to the colour of the Lord's feet which are like the red or pink lotus. Because it had its origin from the foot of Lord Vishnu, the primary name of river Ganges was 'Bhawatpadi'. ['Bhagwat' = Lord Vishnu; 'Padi' = from foot.]

After the passage of thousands of Yugas (eras), it established itself in the northern edge of the heaven where the Polar Star is situated. This area is known as 'Vishnu-pad'. It is here that the Lord's great devotee Dhruv accepts the water of this holy river as sanctified water, and the seven celestial sages known as the Sapta-rishis hold it in the lock of hairs on their head. Meanwhile, when the celestial water poured in from the hole in the galaxy, the creator Brahma was alarmed because he realised that its fierce currents would sweep everything away, both in the heaven as well as on the earth where it descended to wash the feet of Lord Vaaman immediately after its entrance in the habitable galaxy. So Brahma used his Kamandalu, the water pot, to contain river Ganges within it.

From the summit of the heaven, i.e. from its northern fringes, Ganges cascaded down to the abode of the Moon God, went past it and fell on the summit of Mt. Meru (the golden mountain where the Gods live, including their king Indra) which is situated within the realm of Brahma, the creator.

From there it divides into four branches—named Sita, Alaknanda, Chakchu and Bhadra.

Out of these, Sita descends from Brahma-puri to the summit of Mt. Kesaraachal, then goes further down and falls upon the summit of Mt. Gandha-maadan, and from

there flows through the area known as Bhadraa-shwa-varsha to finally fall into the salty ocean in the east.

The second branch Alkananda falls to the south of Brahma-puri, goes past countless summits of mountains to finally arrive at the summit of Mt. Hemkut. From there, it cascades down with tremendous speed and force down upon the plains of India (known as Bharat-varsha). Then it traverses the length of the land to fall and merge with the ocean in the south.

Chakchu, the third branch, reaches the summit of Mt. Malyawaan, and from there it flows through the area known as Ketumal-varsha, heading in the western direction to finally fall in the sour ocean in the west.

The fourth branch, Bhadra, falls from the summit of Mt Meru and descends to its north. Falling from one mountain upon another, it reaches the summit of Mt. Sringawaan. From there it flows through the area of the land known as Kuru-desh to finally fall in the northern ocean.

This river is known as the River of Gods or river Gangaa. This is the origin of the river in its celestial form. Refer: Smd. Bhagwat, 5/17/1-9.

When Lord Vaaman's feet were being washed as part of the ritual to honour the guest Brahmin by king Vaaman, Brahma the creator had collected this water in his Kamandalu (water pot) because it was very holy. Refer. Smd. Bhagwat, 8/21/4.

Later on, when king Bhagirath had done severe Tapa (penance) to bring this holy river on the earth so that his ancestors who lay dead due to the curse of sage Kapil could be revived, Brahma told him that he must first prepare Lord Shiva to accept river Ganges on his head because when the river descends from heaven upon earth, it will do so with such tremendous force that the earth would not be able to bear it and would split into two. So Bhagirath did Tapa to please Lord Shiva who agreed to accept the cascading river on the lock of hairs on his head. Then he will gradually allow to let it down upon the plains is a stream that lacks the force by which the river falls thousands of miles from heaven. Refer: Valmiki Ramayan, 1/42/23-25, and 1/43/1.

The story of why Bhagirath did Tapa to bring Ganges upon the earth is narrated in detail in Valmiki's Ramayan, Baal Kand, Sarga 38—44.

Briefly this part of the story is as follows: King Sagar had done a great horse sacrifice known as 'Ashwamedh Yagya'. This sacrificial horse was stolen by Indra, the king of Gods who was renowned for his mischief and jealous nature, in the guise of a demon. The reason was that king Sagar had already done 99 such sacrifices, and if he successfully completed this 100<sup>th</sup> sacrifice, he would have become eligible for the stature of Indra. This Indra could not tolerate.

Now, king Sagar ordered his sixty thousand sons to go and find the horse. They dug up the entire earth in search of the horse, pursuing Indra relentlessly. During the process all the creatures who lived on the earth suffered immensely because their homes were demolished and they were uprooted from their natural habitats. This was what Indra wanted—to instigate Sagar to commit some sort of blunder that would invite the wrath of the creatures and the Brahmins, thereby inviting his own ruin. The Gods rushed to their patriarch Brahma, complaining about the developments. Brahma comforted them that they should not worry because Lord Vishnu who is responsible for the welfare of the creation would certainly do something to rectify the damage and punish the perpetrator.

Meanwhile, even after searching the earth the sons could not find the sacrificial horse. When they reported this to their father, king Sagar, he strongly rebuked them

and ordered them to go back and search once again. This time around, they dug up the subterranean world. Ultimately, they reached the hermitage of sage Kapil on the shore of the eastern ocean. The mischievous Indra had hidden the horse there, but sage Kapil had no idea that it was a stolen sacrificial horse. So, when Sagar's sons saw the horse there, they concluded that it was stolen by the sage, and they haughtily challenged him. The sage was very angry, and he cursed them, reducing them to ashes.

When these sixty thousand sons did not return even after a long time, king Sagar ordered his grandson Anshumaan to go and find out what had happened. Anshumaan followed the path taken by his uncles, and finally reached the place where he saw their ashes in a huge mound. Lamenting and grieving, he wanted to perform their last rites. He also found the horse grazing nearby. For doing the last rites he needed water. Just at that time, Lord Garud (the mount of Lord Vishnu), who was the maternal uncle of his own uncles, came there and told Anshumaan that ordinary water won't liberate his uncles because they were reduced to ashes by the curse of a great sage named Kapil. For this, the water of the holy river Ganges is needed. So he must go and make an effort to bring Ganges to earth so that its water can flow over the ashes and provide your uncles deliverance. Meanwhile, he should take the sacrificial horse and go home to his grandfather.

King Sagar completed his sacrifice and returned to his capital. He did not know how to bring the celestial river of Gods to earth, and he died without accomplishing the task. After his death, Anshumaan ascended the throne. His son was king Dilip. Anshumaan abdicated the throne in favour of his son and went to the Himalayas to do severe Tapa, and died there.

King Dilip had a son named Bhagirath. Dilip did many sacrifices in order to bring river Ganges to earth so that his ancestor's souls could find deliverance, but failed. Worried and frustrated he fell sick and died.

Meanwhile, Bhagirath had no sons, but he still was determined to bring Ganges to earth and fulfill the long cherished desire of his father, grandfather and great grandfather. So he handed over the reins of the kingdom to his wise ministers and went to do the severest form of Tapa one can imagine of. His determination and noble resolve pleased Brahma, the creator, who revealed himself before him and asked him to request for a boon. Bhagirath replied that if Brahma really wants to grant him something then he should bless him that he be able to bring Ganges to earth and wash his ancestors with its holy water so that they can find deliverance. Brahma advised him that he must please Lord Shiva and request him to accept the river on his head prior to its reaching the surface of the earth—because if the river fell directly upon the earth it would split the latter into two with its tremendous force.

So, Bhagirath prayed to Shiva who was more than willing to accept Ganges on his head because the Lord knew that the river had its origin in the foot of Lord Vishnu. As soon as Shiva gave his consent to bear the river on his head, Brahma let his Kamandalu tilt and thus the mighty river Ganges came cascading down with a thunderous force to land upon the matted hairs of Lord Shiva. Ganges was very proud of its own origin and powers, so it thought that it will push Shiva to the under-world by its sheer force. Shiva wanted to teach Ganges a lesson not to be haughty, so the Lord contained the might of the swirling waters of the haughty Ganges in the lock of hairs on his head so much so that the river almost got lost amidst its huge crevices.

Bhagirath was confounded: after all the efforts made by him, the river still failed to reach the ground. So he did Tapa again to please Lord Shiva and ask him to allow Ganges to fall down to earth. Pleased with his sincerity and devotion, Lord Shiva

allowed a thin stream of Ganges to escape from his head and fall in the 'Bindu-sarovar (lake)'. Immediately upon reaching this lake, Ganges branched off into seven streams. The seventh stream followed king Bhagirath who lead its path on a chariot to the spot where the ashes of his ancestors lay. As soon as the holy water of the Ganges touched the ashes, the souls of the sixty thousand sons of king Sagar found liberation and deliverance.

At that time, Brahma appeared and blessed Bhagirath that henceforth Ganges would be deemed to be his daughter and bear his name. It would be known by three names—viz. 'Tripatha-gaa', 'Dibyaa' and 'Bhagirathi'. Hence, the holy river Ganges also came to be known as 'Bhagirathi', the daughter of Bhagirath. Since it flows in the whole of the three worlds, the heaven, the earth and the subterranean world, it is known as 'Tripatha-gaa'—that which flows on three paths. And since it is a holy and divine river, it is known as 'Dibya'—the divine and holy one.

There is another version narrated in *Padma Puran*, *Sristhi Khand*. Here, sage Veda Vyas, who was narrating the Puran to Brahmin audience, told the story of the origin and descent upon the earth of the holy river Ganges in detail when they asked him about it. Briefly this story is as follows:

Veda Vyas said—'In some ancient time, when sage Narad asked Brahma how creation came into being, Brahma told him that at the time of creation, he had requested the Paraa-Prakriti, the primary-primordial Mother Nature, to become the primary cause of creation. Brahma told her that he would use her to create everything.

Hearing this, the Paraa-Prakriti divided herself into seven forms. These seven forms are the following—(i) Gayatri (from which were produced all the Vedas, Swasti, Swaha, Swadha, and Diksha—i.e. all things related to the fire sacrifice), (ii) Vaag-devi or Saraswati, the goddess of speech and knowledge, through whom knowledge and scriptures spread, (iii) Laxmi (the goddess of wealth and prosperity that was needed to sustain and take care of the needs of the creation), (iv) Uma (the consort of Lord Shiva and said to be Mother Goddess from whom all other Gods and Goddesses originated; she is also the one who became instrumental in spread of knowledge), (v) Shakti-beeja (cosmic dynamic energy that gives all the Mantras their inherent mystical powers and is responsible for injecting vitality, energy and force into this creation), (vi) Tapaswini (the patron goddess or the cosmic force overlooking Tapa—austerity and penances), (vii) and Dharma-dravaa (the inherent powers of Dharma—everything that is in accordance to the laws of auspiciousness, righteousness, probity, propriety, ethics and morality).

Brahma thought that the last form, i.e. 'Dharma-dravaa', was the best of the seven forms, and since it was in a liquid form ('Dravaa' = liquid), he stored it into his Kamandalu (water pot).

Now, during the Lord's incarnation as Vaaman (the dwarf mendicant) when he had spread his left foot to measure the entire universe during the sacrifice of king Bali, this foot ruptured the sky and the heaven and appeared before Brahma. It was then that he washed the Lord's holy foot with the water that he had stored in his Kamandalu at the time of creation.

After the Lord's holy foot had been washed, this water fell on Mt. Hemkut. From there this water reached Lord Shiva who immediately placed it on his head because he realised it to be sanctified and holy as it had been used to wash the foot of Lord Vishnu in his incarnation as Lord Vaaman. So, this water now was established on the thick lock of hairs on the head of Lord Shiva.

Later on when king Bhagirath had done severe Tapa with the intention of bringing this holy river on earth so that his dead ancestors could be revived and their souls could find peace, he had prayed to Lord Shiva to let the Ganges come down upon the earth. The Lord allowed its stream to descend upon the earth and follow Bhagirath across the land to the place where his ancestors lay dead. This is how the holy river descended upon earth and traversed eastwards following Bhagirath to finally merge into the ocean.

According to *Valmiki Ramayan*, Ganga was the elder daughter of Himwan, the king of the mountains, and his wife Maina. Maina was the daughter of Mt. Sumeru. The Gods took her to heaven because a number of divine deeds were destined to be dependent upon her. Refer: Valmiki's Ramayan, Baal Kand, Sarga, 35, verse nos. 13-18.]

ब्रह्म जो व्यापकु बेद कहैं, गम नाहिं गिरा गुन-ग्यान-गुनीको ।  
जो करता, भरता, हरता, सुर-साहेबु, साहेबु दीन-दुनीको ।।  
सोइ भयो द्रवरूप सही, जो है नाथु बिरंचि महेस मुनी को ।  
मानि प्रतीति सदा तुलसी जलु काहे न सेवत देवधुनीको ।।146 ।।

146. brahmu jō byāpaku bēda kahair̥, gama nāhir̥ girā guna-gyāna-gunīkō.  
jō karatā, bharatā, haratā, sura-sāhēbu, sāhēbu dīna-dunīkō..  
sō'i bhayō dravarūpa sahī, jō hai nāthu biran̄ci mahēsa munī kō.  
māni pratīti sadā tulasī jalu kāhē na sēvata dēvadhunīkō..146..

Verse no. 7/146—That Supreme Being who is the Lord of the entire creation and the Supreme Atma (Supreme Soul) of existence, who has been acknowledged as an all-pervading and omnipresent Divinity by the Vedas (the primary scriptures), whose qualities and wisdom can not be measured even by the most wise Sharda (the goddess of knowledge and wisdom; also known as Saraswati), who is the One responsible for creation, sustenance and conclusion of this creation or world, who is the only Lord of the Gods, of this world as well as of the heaven, who is the Lord of even Brahma (the creator), Shiva (the concluder of the world) and of exalted sages and seers—that same Supreme Lord has certainly manifested Himself as the water of the holy River Ganges<sup>1</sup>.

Tulsidas advises that one should serve (i.e. use and worship) such a holy water with faith, belief and devotion at all times.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The Supreme Lord thought that he must find out a way so that even the humblest and the lowliest of creatures, humans and non-humans, can have easy access to a means whereby they can wash off their sins and find peace and a way to reach heaven. To be able to worship the Lord God in any form described in the honourable scriptures—whether it is any of the countless manifested forms that are usually known as an incarnation or an image of the Lord, the 'Saguna form', or an un-manifested form that is not visible because it is extremely subtle and sublime though it is omnipresent and all-pervading, known as the 'Nirguna form'—may not be possible for every single living being of this world. Say for instance, an animal can't be expected to read the scriptures, perform religious duties, or worship any form of the Lord in the way the word 'worship' is commonly understood to mean by even the remotest stretch of one's imagination. But the Atma, the soul of all the creatures yearn for peace and liberation and salvation. So should the 'Lord of All' not leave an

option for such unfortunate off-springs of his as these humble animals, or for that matter even humans who are not fortunate enough to obtain liberation and deliverance from their sins by the other conventional methods? Surely the answer is 'yes', the Lord must provide something for these unfortunate members of creation.

And the solution that the Lord decided upon was to transfer a portion of his grace upon the earth in the form of the 'Holy Waters of River Ganges'—so that even the dumb, the deaf and the handicapped could benefit from the Lord's benevolence and grace, and are not deprived of this privilege!]

बारि तिहारो निहारि मुरारि भाएँ परसैं पद पापु लहौंगो ।  
ईसु है सीस धरौं पै डरौं, प्रभुकी समताँ बड़े दोष दहौंगो ॥  
बरु बारहिं बार सरीर धरौं, रघुबीरको है तव तीर रहौंगो ।  
भागीरथी! बिनवौं कर जोरि, बहोरि न खोरि लगै सो कहौंगो ॥147॥

147. bāri tihārō nihāri murāri bha'ēm̐ parasēm̐ pada pāpu lahaungō.  
īsu hvai sīsa dharaum̐ pai ḍaraum̐, prabhukī samatām̐ barē dōśa dahauṅō..  
baru bārahim̐ bāra sarīra dharaum̐, raghubīrakō hvai tava tīra rahauṅō.  
bhāgīrathī! binavaum̐ kara jōri, bahōri na khōri lagai sō kahaungō..147..

Verse no. 7/147—[Tulsidas says—] Oh the Holy Ganges! If suppose I do become as exalted as Lord Vishnu himself (the sustainer of creation and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the Trinity Gods) by the good influence of touching your holy waters then I shall be committing a grave sin because then I shall have to touch you with my foot.

[Legend has it that Ganges emerged from the toes of Vishnu, and Tulsidas is alluding to it. He in essence means to say that—'If I put my foot in your holy water in a bid to touch you and take a dip in your holy waters to rinse my sins, then though I shall be surely cleansed of the sins on the one hand, but on the other hand I would be committing another sin by equating myself with Lord Vishnu from whose toe you, Ganges, emerged. So therefore, I do not wish to insult you by putting my foot in your holy waters.']

In a similar vein, if I happen to become as exalted as Lord Shiva (the concluder of creation and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the Trinity Gods) by holding you on my head, then also I shall be guilty of sin of comparing myself with my revered Lord, Lord Shiva.

[After saying that it would be sinful to put his feet in the holy waters of river Ganges, Tulsidas says that if on the other hand he bends down and uses his palms to cup up water and put it on his head, then this would also not be appropriate as this would mean he is copying Shiva—for Shiva had placed the holy water of Ganges on his head when it descended upon earth from heaven. Tulsidas says that he can't dare to imitate Shiva, the Lord whom he reveres and worships—as that would be another sin on his part.]

And so as a result, I shall have to suffer due to this double sin or offence that I would commit. Therefore, though I have to take birth repeatedly, I would prefer to remain at your banks as a servant of Lord Sri Ram.

[The right honourable saint Tulsidas is so exceptionally careful that he does not wish to do anything within his awareness that would be deemed insulting, even by a remote chance, to either Lord Vishnu or Lord Shiva even if it means of being deprived of the golden chance of seeking decimation of sins by bathing in the waters

of the holy river Ganges—which is supposed to be an innocuous and routine thing to do. But no, Tulsidas is extra careful!

So, what would he do instead? He would stay on the banks of this holy river, in close proximity to it, seeing the waters and hearing the sound of its currents flowing by, feeling the breeze blowing over its water and caressing his body as if doing a massage, and breathing the air rich in the moisture of the holy river—because he believes that this would give him the same spiritual benefit as actually taking a physical dip into its waters.

Thus far for the Ganges. But Tulsidas will go a step further—and that is, he would be worshipping his beloved Lord Ram while enjoying the above privileges free of cost as additional bonus.]

Oh Bhagirathi (another name of Ganges)! I pray to you with folded hands (which mean that the two hands are bent at the elbows so that the two open palms with their out-stretched fingers touch each other as a gesture of making a humble submission or offering a prayer)—I will say only the thing which will not cause any offence to my well-being or ruin my future.’

[Very wise of Tulsidas! He does not want an exalted position such as those of Vishnu or Shiva, nor does he wish to seek any other method of negating his sins and attaining liberation and deliverance such as that which is expected by taking a dip in the holy waters of river Ganges.

His sole reliance is on his beloved Lord Sri Ram. He does not wish to seek any redemption by any other method except through his Lord Ram. No amount of allurements or enticements can sway him from his chosen path.

Indeed, it is a sterling example of marvellous faith and unwavering devotion as well as of a sense of high scruples and righteousness on the part of Tulsidas! And there is no wonder then therefore that of all the renowned bards and countless saints and seers and sages who have walked on the surface of earth, the Lord God had preferred to honour Tulsidas with the glory and acclaim that would make his name and his writings immortal in the annals of history.]

### Annapūranā (Patron Goddess of Granary)

लालची ललात, बिललात द्वार-द्वार दीन,  
बदन मलीन, मन मिटै ना बिसूरना।  
ताकत सराध, कै बिबाह, कै उछाह, कछू,  
डोलै लोल बूझत सबद डोल-तूरना॥  
प्यासेहूँ न पावै बारि, भूख्रें न चनक चारि,  
चाहत अहारन पहार, दारि घूर ना।  
सोकको अगार, दुखभार भरो तौलौ जन  
जौलौ देबी द्रवै न भवानी अन्नपूरना॥148॥

148. lālaci lalāta, bilalāta dvāra-dvāra dīna,  
badana malīna, mana miṭai nā bisūranā.  
tākata sarādha, kai bibāha, kai uchāha, kachū,  
ḍōlai lōla būjhata sabada ḍhōla-tūranā..  
pyāsēhūṁ na pāvai bāri, bhūkhēm na canaka cāri,  
cāhata ahārana pahāra, dāri ghūra nā.  
sōkakō agāra, dukhabhāra bharō taulaurṁ jana

jaulaurṁ dēbī dravai na bhavānī annapūranā..148..

Verse no. 7/148—As long as Goddess Annapurna does not become benign, favourable and benevolent, a man covets (is hungry and greedy) for each morsel of food, and being distressed, withered and emaciated due to hunger, he wanders from door to door begging and whinning, but the main cause of his worries and problems is not removed.

He is always on the look-out for any marriage function, funeral or a festival (because he would get something to eat). He greedily roams about, and if he hears the sound of any drum or bugle, he asks, 'Is there any function, ceremony or festival?' (so that he can go and eat something).

He does not get water when thirsty, not even four grains of gram when hungry. His hunger is like a mountain (huge and unsatisfied) but he does not get even a grain of pulse lying on the grinding stone. In this way he is always crushed under the burden of woes, distress and unhappiness (and never finds an end to it).

### Prayer To Lord Siva/Saṅkara

भस्म अंग, मर्दन अनंग, संतत असंग हर।  
सीस गंग, गिरिजा अर्धंग, भूषण भुजंगबर॥  
मुंडमाल, बिधु बाल भाल, उमरु कपालु कर।  
बिबुधबृंद-नवकुमुद-चंद, सुखकंद सूलधर॥  
त्रिपुरारि त्रिलोचन, दिग्बसन, बिषभोजन, भवभयहरन।  
कह तुलसिदासु सेवत सुलभ सिव सिव सिव संकर सरन॥149॥

149. bhasma aṅga, mardana anaṅga, santata asaṅga hara.  
sīsa gaṅga, girijā ardhaṅga, bhūśana bhujaṅgabara..  
muṇḍamāla, bidhu bāla bhāla, umarū kapālu kara.  
bibudhabrṇḍa-navakumuda-canda, sukhakanda sūladhara..  
tripurāri trilōcana, digbasana, biśabhōjana, bhavabhayaharana.  
kaha tulasidāsu sēvata sulabha siva siva siva saṅkara sarana..149..

Verse no. 7/149—Lord Shiva has ash (of the sacrificial fire) smeared all over his body. He has crushed Kamdeo (patron God of lust/passion) and always remains as a recluse. He has retained river Ganges on his head, Goddess Parvati by his side (his one half, as his consort), and different varieties of snakes are his ornaments. He has a garland of skulls around his neck, the 2nd night's moon (the moon of the 2nd night of the dark fortnight) on his forehead, while a tabor (a drum shaped like an hour glass) and skull adorn his hands.

For the new lily flower-like community of Gods, Lord Shiva, who bears (holds) the trident, is like the Moon personified.

[The lily opens its buds to the full and therefore appears most charming during a full moon night. Here, the gods are likened to the 'lily', and when they see Lord Shiva they feel very happy and exhilarated resembling the lily that cheers up at the sight of the full moon.]

Lord Shiva is the root of happiness and joy, and an enemy of the demon Tripura<sup>1</sup>.

He is the 'Three-eyed Lord' (who is therefore known as 'Trilochan' or 'Trinetrum').



[Shiva is said to have two conventional eyes, and an additional one, known as the eye of wisdom, that he has on his forehead. This third eye has the intense power of fire encapsulated in it. This is no ordinary fire, but it is the 'fire of Yoga'. Lord Shiva is the patron deity of ascetics and a master Yogi, an ascetic who has reached the acme of success in meditation and contemplation, thereby empowered with the stupendous energy and dynamism that Yoga bestows upon its practitioner. The Lord opens this eye rarely, but if he does then the fire that springs forth is the thunderbolt of destruction that destroys all evil and vices that had annoyed Shiva so much that he opened this third eye to burn to ashes these vices.]

He remains naked (almost that is, for he wraps a deer-skin around his hip region), drinks poison, and is the one who removes the fear of the world.

[Shiva remains 'naked' to indicate that he is truth personified, and has nothing to conceal. Another reason is that he a great ascetic who has no attachments of any kind, and like a true ascetic he prefers to wear the firmament as his raiment.

The 'poison' referred to here is the terrible Halahal poison that was produced in some ancient time when the ocean was churned by the gods and the demons in search of nectar. This poison was so scalding that had it fallen anywhere on earth, it would have scorched everything alive. So the gracious and merciful Lord Shiva decided to spare this world the horrible consequences that would befall on it due to this poison, and so cupped it up and put it in his throat. That had resulted in the Lord's throat turn purple because the horrendous poison had burned its inside.

That is why it is said here that the Lord 'removes the fear of the world'.]

Such an admirable Lord known as Shiva is very easily available (accessible or attainable) when he is pleased by offering of sincere worship.

Tulsidas says—'I have taken refuge at his holy feet.'

[Note—See verse no. 150 herein below which reiterates once again many of the things stated in this verse.

Tulsidas' immortal epic story of Lord Ram, known as *Ram Charit Manas*, highly respects Lord Shiva. In it, Lord Ram, who was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Being, has said himself that if one wishes to have 'Bhakti' (devotion) for the Lord, then it is necessary for him to have great respect of Lord Shiva—reference: *Ram Charit Manas*, Uttar Kand, Doha no. 45; and Lanka Kand, Doha no. 2 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 7-8, till Chaupai line nos. 1-4 that precedes Doha no. 3.

Prayers to Lord Shiva are also found in (i) *Ram Charit Manas*, Uttar Kand, Doha no. 108 and its entire preceding Chandas; and (ii) *Vinai Patrika*, verse nos. 3-14.

<sup>1</sup>Demon Tripurasur/Tarakasur—Tarakasur was the son of Vajraanga and his consort Varaangi. He had done severe Tapa (austerity and penance) as a result of which the creator Brahma had granted him several boons which had made him invincible. He was killed by Lord Subramanya, the son of Shiva and Parvati. He had three sons—Taaraaksha, Kamlaaksha and Vindyumaali. They had also pleased Brahma and by his blessings built three great cities, collectively called 'Tripura'. These cities were made of gold, silver and iron. These three demon brothers were collectively called Tripurasur—the demons of the three cities. When they became a nuisance for the Gods, Shiva destroyed these three cities and the demons with one arrow. Therefore he got the name of Tripurari—one who destroyed the three enemy cities.

The story of Tripurasur with a slight variation is narrated in *Bhagwat Mahapurana*, 7/10/53-58. According to it, once when the demons were defeated by the gods, they went to take refuge with the greatest demon of them all, the mighty demon

named 'Maya Daanav'. He was the one who had created the golden city of Lanka for Ravana.

Maya Danav created three huge planes made of gold, silver and iron. These planes were so huge that they resembled entire cities and were well provided for with all the things necessary for comfortable living. Maya Daanav handed them to the three chief demons named Taaraaksha, Kamlaaksha and Vindiyumaali who were said to be the son of Tarkasur. The special quality of these planes was that they were hidden from view and flew stealthily. Emboldened by being invisible, the demons went on the rampage, plundering and laying to waste the three worlds, viz. the heaven, the earth and the sky. The gods could not fight them as these demons were invisible. Besides this, these three city-like planes had a pond of nectar each, the contents of which made the demons invincible and beyond the reach of death.

Frustrated and flabbergasted, the gods approached Lord Shiva to get rid of the demons. Lord Shiva invoked his specially empowered arrow known as the 'Pashupatastra'. When shot, it produced countless arrows spewing fierce tongues of flame. Though these arrows burnt the three cities or planes ("Tripurs"), the demons however managed to survive by taking a dip in the pond of nectar that was present in each of the three places.

Confused, Lord Shiva invoked Lord Vishnu, the maverick Lord who knows every trick in creation as he is the Supreme Being, to find some solution. Vishnu disguised himself as a cow and made the Creator Brahma a calf. They went to these ponds and drank the nectar. The demons were so dazed by the Lord's Maya (delusion creating powers) that they could not respond and react. After that, Vishnu prepared for the great war—creating the chariot from Dharma (righteousness), the charioteer from Gyan (knowledge), the war standard from Vairagya (renunciation), the horses from Aishwarya (fame and might), bow from Tapa (penance), the body armour from Vidya (skills), arrows from Kriya (deeds and dynamism), and all other paraphernalia of war by employing other mystical powers he had.

Then, on an auspicious moment of the asterism of "Abhijit" (conquer now), Lord Shiva rode this chariot and burnt the three cities by a single arrow.

According to the Ramayana of Valmiki, Baal Kand, Canto 75, two great bows were made from the bones of Dadhichi. One was known as "Sarang" and the other was known as "Pinak". The former was held by Lord Vishnu, and the latter by Lord Shiva. Vishnu killed the demons with his Sarang bow, while Shiva used his Pinak to destroy the three cities.

Another version of who the demon "Tripurasur" was appears in Skanda Puran, Aawantya Reva-Khand. It says that the son of the demon king Bali was known as 'Baana-sur'. He had thousand arms. He worshipped Lord Shiva for a thousand years. Pleased with him, Lord Shiva asked him to seek a boon, upon which Baanasur requested the Lord to provide him with a city that is so invincible that none of the gods can ever conquer it, except of course by Lord Shiva whom he had worshipped as his deity. Shiva granted him his wish.

The cunning Baanasur then decided to please the other three gods of the Trinity, i.e. Lords Vishnu and Brahma. So he worshipped them one by one and extracted similar boons from them as he had done from Shiva. Once done, he now had three invincible cities that symbolized his sway and domain covering the three dimensions of creation—viz. the heaven, the earth and the nether world. Then he went mad with recklessness, plundering and pillaging at will. Terrified, the gods approached Lord Shiva as he was the one who had initially blessed Baanasur, and also because the demon had himself exempted Shiva from the boon of immunity from destruction.

Then, Shiva strung his bow called Pinak, mounted an arrow called Aghor, and angrily shot it at the three cities ruled by Baanasur. This arrow instantly burnt and reduced the three cities to ashes. Their residue fell in the holy river Narmada. Then Baanasur fervently prayed to Lord Shiva to be pleased with him and give him abode in his own divine Loka known as the 'Shiva-Loka', the divine abode of Shiva in the heaven.

The Sharav Upanishad of Atharva Veda, verse no. 14 describes that Lord Shiva is also known as the slayer of the demon Tirpurasur. Hence, Shiva or Rudra is also called Tripurari. The three cities ruled by Tripurasur symbolised the three worlds, viz. the heaven, the earth and the nether world.

The story of the birth of Tarkaasur in 'Padma Puran, Sristi Khanda' is as follows—By the blessings of sage Kashyap, mother Diti gave birth to a son named 'Vajraanga' because his body was as strong as Vajra, the hardest and the strongest material in existence. [Vajra + Anga (body)]

As soon as he was born he became an expert in the knowledge of all the scriptures. On the instructions of his mother he went to the heaven and ensnared Indra (the king of gods) and brought him captive before his mother. At the intervention of Brahma (the creator) and sage Kashyap (his father), Vajraanga freed Indra. He then requested Brahma that he may be inspired to do Tapa and succeed in it.

Brahma created a girl named 'Varaangi' and gave her to him as his bride. Then, both the husband and the wife, i.e. Vajraanga and Varaangi, began doing severe Tapa (penance). Brahma was pleased and blessed Vajrranga that demonic tendencies would not emerge in his heart.

After successfully completing his Tapa, Vajraanga returned home but did not find his wife Varaangi there. When he went out to search for her, he saw her crying in the forest. On enquiry she told him that Indra had not only tormented her and made her miserable but had even compelled her to leave home. She wished to have retribution, and therefore asked her husband (Vajraanga) to provide her with a son who would punish Indra and avenge her insult at his hands.

Vajraanga did Tapa once again, and Brahma blessed him with a son as desired. This son was "Taarak" as he liberated his mother from her torments by severely punishing Indra: he captured Indra and put him in shackles. [A similar narration of doing Tapa and receiving a son as a boon is narrated in 'Matsya Puran', Chapter 147, verse no. 17.]

Varaangi had borne the child in her womb for a thousand years before he was born. Taarak, her son, was a brave and invincible warrior. To avenge his mother's insult at the hands of Indra (king of gods), he went to Mt. Paariyaatra and did so severe Tapa that the gods and the rest of the world began to get scorched by the heat generated by it. [Refer: (i) 'Matsya Puran', Chapter 148, and (ii) Kalidas' 'Kumar Sambhav', Sarga 1, verse no. 56.]

According to 'Matsya Puran', Chapter 148, verse no. 18 onwards, Taarak prayed to Brahma as follows—'Oh Lord! You live in the heart of all living beings, and as such nothing is hidden from you. Everyone wants to treat others the way the latter treat him. The gods have an eternal jealousy with us (the Asurs, the non-gods, the sons of Diti) and do not want us to live peacefully and prosper. I want to liberate the demon race. Hence, please grant me the boon that no warrior can kill me with any weapon. This is all I want.'

According to 'Padma Puran', Taarak asked Brahma for the grant of a boon that he is not killed by any living being.

In both the cases Brahma told him that this is impossible because all those who are born must die, without exception. So it is better if he re-phrases his request and specifies the person or entity from which he seeks immunity. Taarak then asked that he may not die at the hands of anyone except an infant of seven days of age or younger—in the hope that it would be impossible for such a small child, who is not even eight days old, to kill him, thereby making him invincible and immune to be killed by anyone who is old enough to confront him.

After the granting of the desired boon, both Brahma and Taarak went back to their respective homes. When the news spread that Taarak has successfully acquired a unique boon which would make him virtually immune from defeat and death, all the known famous demons of the time, viz. Mahish, Kaalnemi, Jambha, Grasan, Shumbha etc., came and joined forces with him, vowing their allegiance to him and declaring him as their chief. [Refer: 'Matsya Puran', Chapter 148, and Chapter 154, verse nos. 20-26, 47-49.]

Thus emboldened, Tarkaasur unleashed mayhem and terror in the heaven: rampaging and plundering, imprisoning the gods and terrorizing them. The entire composite army of the gods failed to dent his strength and stop his seeking revenge from the gods. The gods approached their patriarch Brahma to help them. Brahma told them about the boon he had to grant Taarak, and advised them that since only a child below the age of seven days could kill the demon, they should make an effort in this direction and see how Shiva can be motivated to marry and beget a son. Brahma then told them (the gods) about Parvati's Tapa with the intention of marrying Shiva, and that he has already granted her wish alongside Lord Ram requesting Shiva to forgive her for her past sins in her previous life as Sati (when she had defied Shiva and had assumed the form of Lord Ram's wife Sita in order to test the integrity of Lord Ram) and marry her.

Meanwhile, Shiva is submerged in doing meditation, so the gods must try to devise a method whereby Shiva would marry Parvati. Their son would then kill Tarkaasur. [Refer—(i) 'Matsya Puran', Chapters 146 and 154; and (ii) Kalidas' 'Kumar Sambhav', Canto 2, verse nos. 57, 59, 61.]

In Goswami Tulsidas' epic story of Lord Ram by the name of 'Ram Charit Manas', this entire episode is narrated in Baal Kand, (i) from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 82—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 89; and (ii) Chaupai line nos. 3-8 that precede Doha no. 103.

The Tapa done by Parvati and the reason for it is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 65—to Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 75.

The sin of Parvati in her previous life as Sati is also narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 48—to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 65.]

गरल-असन दिगबसन ब्यसन भंजन जनरंजन ।  
कुंद-इंदु-कर्पूर-गौर सच्चिदानंदघन ॥  
बिकटबेष, उर सेष, सीस सुरसरित सहज सुचि ।  
सिव अकाम अभिरामधाम नित रामनाम रुचि ॥  
कंदर्पदर्प दुर्गम दमन उमारमन गुनभवन हर ।  
त्रिपुरारि! त्रिलोचन! त्रिगुनपर! त्रिपुरमथन! जय त्रिदसबर ॥150॥

150. garala-asana digabasana byasana bhanjana janaranjana.  
kunda-indu-karpūra-gaura saccidānandaghana..

bikaṭabēśa, ura sēśa, sīsa surasarita sahaja suci.  
 siva akāma abhirāmadhāma nita rāmanāma ruci..  
 kandarpadarpa durgama damana umāramana gunabhavana hara.  
 tripurāri! trilōcana! trigunapara! tripuramathana! jaya tridasabara..150..

Verse no. 7/150—Lord Shiva is the exalted Lord who can even devour poison. [That is, Shiva obviously has some superior powers that makes it possible for him to drink poison which would otherwise kill all others. Refer: verse 149 herein above.]

He remains naked (as a strict renunciate and ascetic).

He is an eliminator of sorrows, and is the Lord who gives joy and delight to the hearts of his devotees.

His complexion is fair like the Jasmine or Lotus flowers, or like the Moon or Camphor.

He is an abode of truthfulness and eternal bliss.

His attire though is terribly (unconventionally)—because he has Seshnath the serpent present on his chest.

The most pure and holy river Ganges is present on his head (swirling between the long tresses that are intertwined together in the form a huge crown on his head).

He is auspiciousness personified, is a Lord who is eternally contented (i.e. he has no desires of any kind whatsoever), and is an abode of beauty and splendour. [Lord Shiva is beautiful and splendorous because he personifies all those qualities that are glorious, beautiful and radiant—viz. truthfulness, auspiciousness, renunciation, benevolence, grace, contentedness etc.]

He is always engrossed in repeating the holy name of Lord Ram and is submerged in the thoughts and remembrance of the Lord. [That is, Shiva does Japa, which means repetition of a divine formula that has immense spiritual powers, using the holy name of Lord Ram. He meditates upon the Supreme Being represented by Lord Ram by using the time-tested formula of the Lord's holy name, i.e. "RAM", as it is the one that gives eternal bliss, is the medium for salvation and emancipation, and it the only Mantra honoured by the Vedas as being the 'Tarak Mantra' or the divine formula that gives liberation and deliverance to the creature.]

He has vanquished the extreme arrogance of Kamdeo (the god or personified form of lust, passion, desires and wants).

He is the beloved husband of Uma (who is also known as Parvati and is regarded as the Mother Goddess).

He is like a temple of excellent virtues/qualities, and is an eliminator of sins (hara)<sup>1</sup>.

He is the Lord of the 3 worlds (tripurāri)<sup>2</sup>, has 3 eyes (trilōcana)<sup>3</sup>, is beyond the 3 Gunas (Satvic, Rajsic and Tamsic--trigunapara)<sup>4</sup>, is the slayer of the demon Tripura (tripuramathana)<sup>5</sup>, and is the superior Lord of the Trinity (tridasabara)<sup>6</sup>.

Hail and glory to him! Glory to him!!

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word "Hara" literally means one who steals or takes away. Here, the inference is obvious—the Lord takes away all the sins of his devotees, freeing them of their horrendous consequences.

<sup>2</sup>The three worlds are the heaven, the earth and the nether world.

<sup>3</sup>Trilochan—Shiva has three eyes: two conventional eyes and the third eye of wisdom that is located on his forehead.

<sup>4</sup>The three Gunas—The character of all the living beings in the entire creation is dependent upon three celebrated primary qualities called the Gunas. They are Sata, Raja and Tama. Here it means that Lord Shiva is not affected by any of these three

Gunas which invariably influence all other entities of this creation, including the Gods. But Lord Shiva is beyond the purview of these Gunas, remaining detached from them in a complete neutral and renunciate mood.

(a) The *Sata Guna* is the best of the three qualities present in any creature. It is a positive quality and is marked by a propensity for following the path of nobility, auspiciousness, probity, propriety, virtuousness, holiness and righteousness. Creatures that have a predominance of Sata Guna are inclined to do selfless service, be benevolent, merciful, kind and gracious, have coolness of head and a rationale and balanced mind, be contented, have humility and piety etc. Such creatures are devoted to good values in life and have a desire to acquire knowledge that would help them reach higher spiritual goals in life.

This Sata Guna is marked by high standards of ethical and moral existence that makes the bearer of such qualities highly respected in society. Such people have a spiritual dimension to their personality. This quality is spiritually uplifting and gives a divine halo to those who possess it and practice it.

The Vasanas that have the Sata Guna or quality dominant in them are like a veil covering the lamp or like a smoke covering the fire. A slight breeze will remove this smoke. Similarly a little bit of prayer and meditation will remove the Satwic desires; its removal requires the least effort.

(b) The second quality is the *Raja Guna* and it makes a man more attracted to this material world and its charms, and less spiritually inclined. The Raja Guna is the medium quality marked by a greater percentage of worldly passions, desires and attachments and their natural offshoots in a creature. It makes a creature inclined towards the material things of the gross world and their enjoyments, towards creation of wealth, its enhancement and protection, and generally having a desire for growth, development and expansion etc. It covers such qualities as worldly yearnings, passions, a stormy nature, agitated behaviour, ambitions, selfishness, expansionist tendencies, a desire to acquire, retain and develop such acquisitions even to the detriment of one's long term spiritual welfare and even if such actions cause pain to others. All these pertain to this materialistic world. Such qualities give worldly fame and prosperity. If these qualities are judiciously mixed with the Satwic qualities, then they provide the person the better of the two worlds, both in terms of worldly fame as well as spiritual well being.

The Vasanas that have the Rajasic Guna or quality dominant in them can be compared to dust on a mirror. In this case some dusting and rubbing is needed to clean the mirror; a greater effort is needed as compared to the case with Satwic quality.

(c) The third quality is called the *Tama Guna* and is the meanest and the basest of the three Gunas. It is a demeaning quality in a creature that leads to his downfall and perpetual entanglement with things that are considered improper and unethical. It creates an inclination for committing all sorts of sins, misdeeds and demeanours. It leads the creature towards negativity and inspires him to acquire negative qualities such as various vices, evils, sins, perversions etc. It makes him inclined to be greedy, rapacious, haughty, arrogant, lustful, intoxicated, vile and wild to the extreme. Such a creature with a predominance of Tama Guna has utter disregard for propriety, noble virtues and ethics, for righteousness and morality.

In brief, it is the most degrading, denigrating and contemptible of the three characteristics in a person, and leads to such behaviour which is utterly immoral, denigrating and depraved, marked by grossness, crassness and recklessness. It therefore leads to his downfall, ignominy and ruin as well as ignorance, delusions, gloom, inertia, anger, frustration etc.

The Tamasic Guna or quality is like the embryonic membrane that covers the foetus in the womb. They cannot be removed easily and require great diligence, effort, persistence, dedication and careful handling requiring time and patience. It is the basest and the lowliest of the three characteristics, and the worst type to possess.

<sup>5</sup>The slayer of demon Tripurasur—see note of verse no. 149 herein above.

<sup>6</sup>The three Gods of the Trinity are—Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Shiva the concluder of creation. Basically these three Gods are three forms of the same Supreme Being performing different functions in creation—viz. creating, sustaining and concluding. It's a clear case of 'delegation of authority' by the Supreme Authority. Out of these three, Shiva is said to be superior because he depicts the nature of the Supreme Being more closely by the virtue of his being detached and dispassionate from all things, being truthful, remaining always in a meditative mood, is always blissful and holy, is most enlightened and self-realised like an acclaimed ascetic, and so forth. But it does not mean that any insinuation is meant to the other two Gods of the Trinity. Brahma is the patriarch of creation and the one who created the Vedas, the primary scriptures. How can one expect such a highly exalted God who not only was the initiator of creation of which Shiva is a part, and who was the fountainhead of knowledge and wisdom that were enshrined by him in the words of the Vedas be junior to Shiva in any whatso way, for Shiva is much younger to Brahma. As for the other God of the Trinity, i.e. Vishnu, it is absolutely clear that Shiva himself worships Vishnu—because Lord Ram is a manifestation of Vishnu. And so how can Vishnu be junior to Shiva if the latter worships the former.

But what distinguishes Shiva from the other two Gods is the level of his renunciation and detachment from this world. While Brahma and Vishnu remain worried respectively about the world they created and are duty-bound to protect, Shiva remains aloof, being lost in meditation and never meddling in the mundane affairs of the world and its grossness. He represents that state of consciousness that transcends the waking and the sleeping states of existence—i.e. the state of super consciousness that is eternally blissful and beatified, the spiritual state of existence that is known as Samadhi. Neither Brahma nor Vishnu can afford this state, and it is not their fault because they are assigned the task of looking and caring for the world.]

अरध अंग अंगना, नामु जोगीसु, जोगपति ।  
 बिषम असन, दिगबसन, नाम बिस्वेसु बिस्वगति ।।  
 कर कपाल, सिर माल ब्याल, बिष-भूति-बिभूषन ।  
 नाम सुद्ध, अबिरुद्ध, अमर अनवद्य, अदूषन ।।  
 बिकराल-भूत-बेताल-प्रिय भीम नाम, भवभयदमन ।  
 सब बिधि समर्थ, महिमा अकथ, तुलसिदास-संसय-समन ।।151 ।।

151. aradha aṅga aṅganā, nāmu jōgīsu, jōgapati.  
 biśama asana, digabasana, nāma bisvēsu bisvagati..  
 kara kapāla, sira māla byāla, biśa-bhūti-bibhūśana.  
 nāma sud'dha, abirud'dha, amara anavadya, adūśana..  
 bikarāla-bhūta-bētāla-priya bhīma nāma, bhavabhayadamana.  
 saba bidhi samartha, mahimā akatha, tulasidāsa-sansaya-samana..151..

Verse no. 7/151—'Oh! He has Parvati (his divine consort) by his side but is still recognised as the king among ascetics or recluses.<sup>1</sup>

[Now, having said that Lord Shiva has a wife by his side but still is regarded or honoured as the king of ascetics, the following part of the verse goes on to describe why it is so—]

The Lord eats things that are usually considered unpalatable—such as Bhaang (cannabis-sativa) and Dhatura (an intoxicating herb). [Say, which household will eat such a thing when his wife is there to cook a delicious, piping hot fresh meal for him? This shows that Shiva had full control over his taste and tongue which is one of the five sense organs that cause the fall of a man.]

His clothes consist of all the four directions (i.e. he wears the firmament as his raiment, or in other words, nothing). [He is a highly self-realised renunciate and an ascetic par-excellence. Therefore he is least bothered about decorating his body which he knows is perishable. Like a true hermit, he wears the 'sky' as his garment. It also shows that he has no secret to hide, and this compounds his reputation as being the God who is 'truthfulness personified' as Truth has nothing to hide.]

But inspite of this oddity of behaviour, he is called the 'Lord of the Universe' (*bisvēsu*) and the ultimate refuge of the world (*bisvagati*).

[According to metaphysics, the final destiny of the soul of the individual creature is the Parmatma or the Supreme Soul of creation. The individual soul finds its final peace only when it merges with its parent Soul, the Parmatma, just like the turbulent water of the river never finding peace till it falls and merges with the ocean. So here, Shiva is compared to the 'Parmatma' where the world will finally find its refuge. It also means that Shiva represents an ideal deity to guide creatures the way one should live one's life if one wishes to attain peace and bliss. Otherwise, the creature would remain engrossed in the affairs of the world like the other two Gods of the Trinity or even all other Gods of creation who remain on their toes doing their duties and bid to carry out the mandate given to them by the Supreme Being to look after myriad functions of this huge creation.]

He has a skull in his hand, a garland of serpents on his head, and the terrible poison, obtained at the time of the churning of the ocean, in his throat, while the ash (obtained from the ritual of a fire sacrifice) smeared on his body makes it look magnificent. But (inspite of such negative aspects) the Lord's name is 'pure' (*nāma sud'dha*), he is 'without obstacles' (i.e. nothing taints him and nothing stands in the way of his purity and holiness—*abirud'dha*), he is 'eternal and imperishable' (*amara*), and he is 'without blemishes and is faultless' (*anavadya, adūšana*).

Besides his usual pleasant names (some of which have been listed in verse no. 150 herein above), he has some other names which are terrible in themselves as they create an image of someone who is fearsome and awe-inspiring (*bikarāla*). For, he is also called the Lord who is 'dear to ghosts, phantoms, spirits' (*bhūta-bētāla-priya*).

But inspite of this anomaly and irony, the Lord is the one who can destroy the fear of this world. [The magic and the mystery of the matter is that though Lord Shiva has been depicted with all sorts of negative characteristics in his physical appearances and oddities of behaviour, it is still an irrefutable fact that he removes all fears from the heart of the world. Lord Shiva's devotees are not scared stiff of him or shun him because of his odd attire, behaviour, habits, fierce names and so on. They look at the positive side of the Lord's virtues and characters—for example, they see him as calm and serene, fair-complexioned and pleasant to behold like the full moon, the Lord who holds the holy river Ganges on his head, who is always doing meditation, and is always eager to show grace and benevolence upon all and sundry, requiting their sins and paving the way for their soul's liberation and deliverance. Like the case of a hermit whom no one fears inspite of some oddity in his behaviour because everyone knows that the hermit can never mean harm to them, Lord Shiva is feared by none.]

Tulsidas says that such a Lord Shiva is capable in every way; his fame and glory cannot be sufficiently described; and he is the one who can remove my doubts and confusions (i.e. he can remove my delusions and institute mental stability in me).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>On the face of it he has a wife and a family consisting of his two sons Ganesh and Kartikeya. But the divine glory and spiritual majesty of Lord Shiva is that inspite of apparently living like an ordinary household who has a wife and sons, he remains detached and aloof from them at the level of his internal being. Usually, if a



person has a wife he cannot keep himself detached from the affairs of the world and spend long days in seclusion, isolated from the world and lost in his spiritual pursuits such as doing Japa and Yoga (repetition of Lord's holy name, doing meditation and contemplation, and other such practices). Besides this, he lives like an ascetic—naked, with ash smeared all over his body, not concerned about any of the sense organs or their objects in the external world, and so on and so forth. The very fact that Shiva successfully does them inspite of having a wife by his side is a proof of his enlightened state of existence and self-realisation. And there is no wonder in it—for there have been great sages and seers who had wives, but were nevertheless highly enlightened and self-realised. Some examples that easily come to the mind from the story of the Ramayan itself are sage Vashistha who had a wife named Arundhati and who was the court priest of Ayodhya and the Guru of Lord Ram himself, and the other is sage Atri and his wife Anusuiya.]

भूतनाथ भयहरन भीम भयभवन भूमिधर ।  
 भानुमंत भगवंत भूतिभूषण भुजंगबर ।।  
 भव्य भावबल्लभ भवेस भव-भार-बिभंजन ।  
 भूरिभोग भैरव कुजोगगंजन जनरंजन ।।  
 भारती-बदन बिष-अदन सिव ससि-पतंग-पावक-नयन ।  
 कह तुलसिदास किन भजसि मन भद्रसदन मर्दनमयन ।।152 ।।

152. bhūtanātha bhayaharana bhīma bhayabhavana bhūmidhara.  
 bhānumanta bhagavanta bhūtibhūśana bhujaṅgabara..  
 bhabya bhāvaballabha bhavēsa bhava-bhāra-bibharījana.  
 bhūribhōga bhairava kujōgaganījana janaranījana..  
 bhāratī-badana biśa-adana siva sasi-pataṅga-pāvaka-nayana.  
 kaha tulasidāsa kina bhajasi mana bhadrasadana mardanamayana..152..

Verse no. 7/152—He (Lord Shiva) is the Lord of Ghosts (bhūtanātha i.e. anyone who worships him and regards himself as the Lord's devotee has nothing to fear from ghosts and other evil spirits; he is freed from delusions and imaginary fears of the world that the word 'ghost' implies).

While being the remover of all types of fiercest of fears (of his devotees) on the one hand, he, on the other hand, is also the one who inspires fear and awe (in those who are sinful) (bhayaharana bhīma bhayabhavana).

The Lord is the bearer of the earth (bhūmidhara). [This means that Shiva is a sustainer and protector of life in this world. Conventionally it is believed that he is the 'concluder' of creation and responsible for death amongst the three Gods of the Trinity. The other two Gods are Lord Vishnu who is responsible for sustenance of creation, and Lord Brahma who has the job of creation. Hence, this particular statement implies obviously that there is actually no difference between Lord Shiva and the other two Gods of the Trinity.]

He the Lord God who is splendorous like the sun, and has majesty, glory and fame that too shines and spreads in this world like the dazzling rays of the sun itself (bhānumanta bhagavanta).

The Lord's ornaments consists of serpents (that are hung loosely around his body like so many garlands—bhujaṅgabara), and ash (from the fire sacrifice that is smeared on his body like an ointment—bhūtibhūśana).

He is an embodiment of the grand virtues of magnificence, majesty and auspiciousness (bhabya).

The only thing and emotion the Lord loves and respects is honesty of belief, faith and conviction. (bhāvaballabha).

He is the Lord of the world (bhavēsa), as well as the destroyer of the burden of evil and vices and their troubling consequences in this world (bhava-bhāra-bibhanjana).

He is the Lord who lacks no joy and happiness, and there is nothing by way of pleasures and comforts that he would wish to have more because he is self-contented (bhūribhōga).

He is also known as 'Bhairav', the Lord of Bhava, who destroys the great sufferings and misfortunes of his devotees, and instead gives them great joy and happiness (bhairava kujōgaganjana janaranjana).

He is so highly wise, erudite, sagacious and enlightened as if he was a personified form of Goddess Bharti, or goddess Saraswati who is the patron goddess of learning and speech (bhārati-badana). [That is, whenever Shiva speaks, his words are rich in wisdom and erudition. He appears to be an embodiment of knowledge and enlightenment like the goddess Saraswati.]

He can drink poisons (as he is so powerful that even poison can't harm him) (biśa-adana).

Oh Lord Shiva! Thou art called 'Shiva' because thou art an embodiment of truthfulness, auspiciousness and all-round good and well-being, and hence beautiful as these stellar qualities are (siva).

Your three eyes symbolise the Moon, the Sun and the Fire respectively (sasi-pataṅga-pāvaka-nayana).

Tulsidas says that to himself: 'Oh my Mana (mind and heart)! Why don't you worship and have devotion for such an auspicious and divine Lord as Shiva who (besides the qualities enumerated above) is a treasury of all goodness (bhadrasadana) and is the destroyer of Kamdeo's pride and arrogance (mardanamayana). [Kamdeo is the patron god of such negative traits as lust, desire and passion. So, Tulsidas means that if his mind and heart worships such a Lord as Shiva then by his grace Tulsidas would be able to overcome these temptations.]'

[Note—"Thou are Dread of even the dreadful, the Terror of the terrible, the Refuge of all beings, the Purifier of all the purifiers. Thou art alone the Controller of those in high places, the Supreme over the supreme, the Protector of the protectors.": Bhrama Sutra—3, Mahanirvana Tantra.]

नागो फिरै कहै मागनो देखि 'न खाँगो कछू', जनि मागिये थोरो ।  
 राँकनि नाकप रीझि करै तुलसी जग जो जुँरे जाचक जोरो ॥  
 नाक सँवारत आयो हौं नाकहि, नाहिं पिनाकिहि नेकु निहोरो ।  
 ब्रह्मा कहै, गिरिजा! सिखवो पति रावरो, दानि है बावरो भोरो ॥153॥

153. nāgō phirai kahai māganō dēkhi 'na khāmṅō kachū', jani māgiyē thōrō.  
 rāmṅani nākapa rījhi karai tulasī jaga jō juraim jācaka jōrō..  
 nāka samvārata āyō haum nākahi, nāhim pinākihi nēku nihōrō.  
 brahmā kahai, girijā! sikhavō pati rāvarō, dāni hai bāvarō bhōrō..153..

Verse no. 7/153—[Seeing the exceedingly benevolent and gracious nature of Lord Shiva that he gives whatever is asked of him by the devotee, not even taking into

consideration about the seeker's antecedents or past deeds or the burden of sins that he may have accumulated in his life to judge whether or not he is eligible for such free-hearted largesse, Brahma the creator became worried and confounded as this would upset the apple-cart of religious jurisprudence and countermand the Law of Karma and the Law of Dharma that lays down that a person reaps what he sows, and that sins must be punished even if in a truncated form.

Shiva gives free spiritual liberation and deliverance to all those who die on the banks of river Ganges at his terrestrial abode at Kashi by simply uttering the holy name of Lord Ram in the dying man's ears. This implies that a person who may not have himself regretted his sins or done anything himself for requital of his evilness throughout his life would get the same spiritual benefit as the person who has been following the path laid down by law of good conduct. This is not good in general terms of the principle that says that all are equal in the eyes of law, because sinful get deliverance so easily without suffering the consequences of their sins while the good have sacrificed all worldly temptations and subjected themselves to hardships throughout their lives to attain the same goal—inspite of the fact that this largesse of Lord Shiva has established the holiness and divinity of Lord Ram's Holy Name by proving that the most sinful, who have no chance of any redemption otherwise, can easily get liberation on the strength of merely hearing the Lord's name, and which means also that even the most unfortunate who have no access to any means of salvation but taking refuge with Shiva has the right to attain his death wish. But this upsets Brahma's laws and administration.

So Brahma was confounded exceedingly, and he approached Shiva's wife Parvati with a plea that she would prevail upon her husband to mend his ways.]

Brahma says to Parvati—'Oh Parvati (the divine consort of Shiva)! Pay heed to me, please. Advise your husband—he is very crazy, simple-hearted, a generous donor and a liberal bestower of boons. Look, he wanders about naked himself, but when he meets an alms-seeker, he tells him not to ask for a little, for there is no dearth of anything with him, and he can grant as much of anything as the seeker wants, and something more as a bonus.

[Brahma means that though Shiva himself keeps nothing material with him, but instead of preaching others renunciation and detachment from material things like he practices these virtues himself, whenever he meets a seeker he is too willing to oblige him and fulfil his wishes by granting him whatso he desires. Is it not wrong that he goes about giving boons even to the undeserving?]

If he has his ways, he would collect all the beggars in this world and make all of them Indras (i.e. like great kings; 'Indra' is the king of gods). [That is, Shiva has been graciously granting all creatures the reward of freedom from hell and attainment of heaven by pardoning their sins and granting them liberation and deliverance. All sinful folks of the world who come to know of his habit flock to him seeking his blessings, and he does not even bat an eyelid before granting them freedom from their sins and the right to go to heaven.]

I have become fed-up of creating heavens for the crowd (i.e. those who have already received his largesse), but 'Pinaaki' (one who had once held the legendary Bow known as 'Pinaak'; here referring to Lord Shiva<sup>1</sup>) does not feel obliged to me.

[Now, this has caused immense pressure upon me for I have been creating heavens to accommodate the crowd given liberation and deliverance by Shiva, and there seems to be no end to it. I am tired and there is no space left any longer. So Shiva must be told to stop this madness.

Besides this, Shiva has never as much as said ‘thank you’ to me. He wouldn't listen to me and stop giving unnecessary boons if I tell him to do so, saying instead: ‘I am doing my job, and you do yours’. In effect he would tell me to mind my business, which is to ‘create’, and if there are countless candidates assigned to heaven by this madness of Shiva granting everyone deliverance and freedom from suffering the consequences of sins, then I must go on creating endless heavens for all of them! Its such ridiculous indeed! So, please Parvati, tell him to exercise some restraint on his habit because I am fed-up of creating heaven after heaven for all those benefiting from your husband Shiva's free-handed boons and gracious benevolence.]'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The ‘Pinaak’ is the bow created by the gods' expert mechanic, engineer, architect, craftsman and smith known as Vishwakarma. He had made two bows, one for Shiva and the other for Vishnu. The one Vishnu held was known as ‘Saarang’.]

बिषु पावकु ब्याल कराल गरें, सरनागत तौ तिहुँ ताप न डाढ़े।  
भूत बेताल सखा, भव नामु दलै पलमें भवके भय गाढ़े।।  
तुलसीसु दरिद्र-सिरोमनि, सो सुमिरें दुख-दारिद्र होहिं न ठाढ़े।  
भौनमें भाँग, धतुरोई आँगन, नागेके आगे हैं मागने बाढ़े।।154।।

154. biśu pāvaku byāla karāla garēm, saranāgata tau tihum̐ tāpa na ḍārhē.  
bhūta bētāla sakhā, bhava nāmu dalai palamēm bhavakē bhaya gārḥē..  
tulasīsu daridra-sirōmani, sō sumirēm dukha-dārida hōhim̐ na ṭhārḥē.  
bhaunamēm bhām̐ga, dhaturōī ām̐gana, nāgēkē āgēm hair̐ māganē  
bārḥē..154..

Verse no. 7/154—[The creator Brahma now subtly praises Lord Shiva by pointing out some of the unique qualities of him which seem to be paradoxes in themselves in as much as they represent opposite qualities that appear to neutralise or contradict each other, but upon analysis they stress upon the greatness and divine nature of Lord Shiva as it is possible for him to straddle the two with extreme ease. Though what Brahma says appear to be a complaint or grudge against Shiva, but he is actually being praised through this verse.]

[Brahma continued to tell Parvati politely—] ‘Look, Shiva himself is wearing ferocious snakes around his neck, has contained the venomous poison in his throat, and his 3rd eye is a receptacle of devastating fire, but his devotees are never scorched or tormented or harmed by any of the miseries and sufferings associated with the three great sufferings of existence called the ‘Traitaap’.

[These three horrible sufferings that rarely exempt any person are (i) Adhyatmik, (ii) Adhibhautik and (iii) Adhidaivik. They refer to sufferings caused by spiritual problems, by worldly creatures and a person's surroundings, and by non-favourable gods and stars.]

On the one hand Shiva's companions are ghosts and phantoms, and one of his names is also ‘Bhava’ (which is an aphorism for fears arising out of existential problems), and on the other hand he is reputed to destroy instantly the tremendous fears of this existence (or of the gross mundane world) from the heart of his devotees.

This Tulsidas' Lord (tulasīsu—i.e. Shiva) appears to be the chief among all the impoverished and the have-nots (because he exhibits all the visible signs of poverty and lack of wealth—viz. he wears no clothes, has no ornaments, does not own any home or other property, lives on mountains and wonders about like a mendicant, does

not have anything proper to eat, and so forth), but on remembering him, poverty and sorrows just cannot stay. [That is, it is such an extreme of wonderment that though Shiva himself has no material possessions of any imaginable kind, yet his mere remembrance or invocation removes all sorts of wants and shortages—whether of the physical and material kind or of the spiritual kind.]

He has only ‘Bhaang’ in his home and ‘Dhatūra’ in his court-yard, but the queue of alms-seekers seeking largesse continue to lengthen in front of this Naked One (Shiva).

[The ‘Bhaang’ and ‘Dhatūra’ are worthless intoxicating plants which are of no use as vegetables for cooking, or even as decorative plants. That is, Shiva has such a poor choice that he prefers thorny wart-like plants that are worthless, but the magic is that he can give his alms-seekers all the goodies of this world should they want them.]

[Note—In short, Shiva is like an attained ‘Fakir’ or a ‘Friar’, a penniless mendicant who appears to be most impoverished in this material-conscious world, but has immense mystical powers that enable him to bestow boons which would put emperors, kings and gods to shame. Lord Shiva may look like a humble hermit who has no material possessions, but the Lord has an endless treasury of infinite spiritual bliss and its accompanying ecstasy that no material thing of the world can give anyone. Though appearing as being powerless and resourceless, the Lord can grant boons of such magnitude that would put to shame all other gods taken together to shame.]

सीस बसै बरदा, बरदानि, चढ्यो बरदा, धरन्यो बरदा है।  
धाम धतूरो, बिभूतिको कूरो, निवासु जहाँ सब लै मरे दाहैं॥  
ब्याली कपाली है ख्याली, चहूँ दिसि भाँगकी टटिन्हके परदा हैं।  
राँकसिरोमनि काकिनिभाग बिलोकत लोकप को करदा है॥155॥

155. sīsa basai baradā, baradāni, caḍhyō baradā, dharan'yō baradā hai.  
dhāma dhatūrō, bibhūtikō kūrō, nivāsu jahām̐ saba lai marē dāhaim̐..  
byālī kapālī hai khyālī, cahūm̐ disi bhām̐gākī ṭṭṭinhakē paradā haim̐..  
rām̐kasirōmani kākinibhāga bilōkata lōkapa kō karadā hai..155..

Verse no. 7/155—[Now, after grumbling over Shiva's paradoxical nature and qualities, Brahma felt that he is not doing the right thing in front of Parvati, because not only is she Shiva's divine consort but is also the Mother Goddess of creation. From all the whinnying and lamentation which show signs of resentment and grudge on the part of Brahma, it appears that he is jealous of Shiva because the latter possesses some stellar qualities which the former lacks. So, here in this verse Brahma wishes to set the record straight by lauding Shiva's greatness and glory.]

The boom-bestowing river Ganges resides on his (Lord Shiva's) head (in the matted lock of hairs that form a crown on his head), and he himself is the best bestower of boons in this world.

His mount is ‘Barada’ (baradā –the huge Bull who is also able to grant boons if anyone cares to offer his worship to him), and his wife Parvati is also a matchless boon-giver.

[That is, not only Shiva himself or his wife Parvati but even his mount, the Bull, who is in fact an animal, can grant boons! Its really such a wonder. The 'Lord', the 'Lady' and their 'Attendant' are all boon givers in their own right.]

His house has a mound of Dhatura (the intoxicating plant) and the ceremonial Ash (from the fire sacrifice) as the only household goods, and his residence is at a place where people take corpses for their last rites (i.e. in the cremation grounds<sup>1</sup>).

Indeed, he who wears snakes and skulls is very strange, mysterious and maverick!

On all the sides of his house there are curtains of the leaves of the Bhaang plant.

He who appears to be worth only a pence in material terms is so mystically empowered that he can make even penniless paupers, who are worthy of only half a pence, into Lokpals (or guardians of the land; or landlords).

[The description of Shiva's home, its surroundings, its provisions, its furnishings and the way it is fashioned in a general way, as well as his own attire and lifestyle show that he is penniless and possesses nothing worth the name in terms of material prosperity and wealth. But when it comes to granting boons or giving largesse, Shiva is like an Emperor who can grant land and title upon anyone he is pleased with. It is such a strange phenomenon.]'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>It is believed that Shiva spends a lot of time wandering in the cremation ground. Why? One reason among many is that he seeks for a dying person whose soul and heart honestly yearn for liberation and deliverance, for salvation and emancipation, but who hadn't had any opportunity to attain this exalted destiny for the self while alive. Such a person eagerly awaits for the arrival of Shiva, the most merciful, benevolent and gracious Lord of all. This is because the dying person knows very well that Shiva is his only and last hope for deliverance and salvation, and since the Lord has a reputation of not turning any seeker away from his door and giving him whatso he wishes, the dying person looks up with eager and tearful eyes in search for Shiva, in the hope that the Lord may come his way while wandering here and there like a benevolent mendicant. So, Shiva roams around in the cremation ground in search of such souls.

It must be carefully noted here that thousands of corpses are brought to the cremation ground for last rites, but not all get this privilege of being granted the boon of deliverance by Shiva. The Lord selects only those who have honestly and sincerely regretted for their sins and have broken all attachments with the world. Such dying persons do not weep for their families or the material things they leave behind, or regret for their unfinished tasks or agenda in this world, and their only wish is to break their soul free from the shackle of the sinful body and from the fetters of sinful deeds that are dragging them to hell. Such persons are regretful and contrite, and they lament that they hadn't had the opportunity earlier to redeem themselves before the Lord God and plead for mercy and redemption. So, the kind-hearted Shiva wants to give them a chance, and hence he comes to such persons and utters the holy name of Lord Ram in their ears. The name of Lord Ram is so powerful that it immediately provides redemption to the soul of the dying man and he escapes from the horrors of hell. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 19; and Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 4-9.]

दानि जो चारि पदारथको, त्रिपुरारि, तिहूँ पुरमें सिर ठीको ।  
भोरो भलो, भले भायको भूखो, भलोई कियो सुमिरें तुलसीको ॥  
ता बिनु आसको दास भयो, कबहूँ न मिट्यो लघु लालचु जीको ।

साधो कहा करि साधन तैं, जो पै राधो नहीं पति पाखतीको ।।156।।

156. dāni jō cāri padārathakō, tripurāri, tihamū puramēm sira tīkō.  
bhōrō bhalō, bhalē bhāyakō bhūkhō, bhalōī kiyō sumirēm tulasīkō..  
tā binu āsakō dāsa bhayō, kabahūm na miṭyō laghu lālacu jīkō.  
sādhō kahā kari sādhana tairi, jō pai rādhō nahīm pati pārabatīkō..156..

Verse no. 7/156—Shiva is a bestower of the boon that grants the four legendary fruits or rewards of ‘Artha’ (wealth and material prosperity), ‘Dharma’ (the qualities of righteousness and goodness), ‘Kaam’ (fulfilment of all desires) and ‘Moksha’ (salvation and emancipation) to the seeker (as well as the devotee).

He is the slayer of demon Triparasur.

He is the chief and the paramount Authority of all the creatures in the three worlds. [The three worlds are—heaven, earth and the nether world.]

He is very humble and simple-hearted, with no trace of deceit and cunning of any kind, and therefore looks for these qualities in his devotees. That is, Lord Shiva seeks purity of emotions and looks for simplicity of heart in anyone who comes to seek his blessings.

Indeed, Shiva is so exceptionally gracious and kind that he has always done good for Tulsidas whenever and wherever the latter remembered the Lord<sup>1</sup>.

In the context of the above observations, Tulsidas addresses and admonishes himself<sup>2</sup> by saying—‘You have abandoned him (Shiva) and become a slave of the sense objects of this materialistic world, but still the lowly greed of your heart has never been satisfied and you have never felt contented. Say, if you haven’t worshipped such a benevolent and kind-hearted Lord Shiva, the husband of goddesses Parvati, then what better fruit or reward do you expect to get by pursuing so many other paths or worshipping other deities instead of the Lord that you still refrain from worshipping Shiva and prefer to waste your time on others?’

[Tulsidas means that when one knows very well the stellar qualities of Lord Shiva as has been enumerated in all the foregoing verses, why doesn’t one worship the Lord instead of worshipping so many other sundry gods and deities to seek fulfilment of wishes? All other gods and deities need a lot of effort to be pleased, and besides this none else would grant liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation so easily and completely as Lord Shiva. When one worships Lord Shiva, one gets the best of the two worlds—on the one hand all his wants and desires in this world are granted, the devotee enjoys all the comforts and happiness that one can expect to have in this life in the world, and on the other hand his spiritual well-being is also taken care of and his soul ensured for salvation and freedom from the eternal sufferings of hell. In spite of such unique and immense benefits, a stupid person avoids worshipping Lord Shiva, thinking that the Lord is a mere mendicant and the patron god of ascetics. Say, ain’t such a fool missing the evergreen tree of wish fulfilment while remaining lost looking at the fruits and flowers of other trees in the forest that have a short life? So Tulsidas advises that one would be wise if he devotes his time in honouring and worshipping Lord Shiva as the Lord can grant all that he wishes.] ’

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Tulsidas is surprised that though he is very humble and lacks worth, still Lord Shiva heeds him and helps him whenever he invokes the Lord. Indeed, Tulsidas is highly indebted to Shiva for taking care of such a non-entity and wretched person as himself. This same sentiment is expressed by him when addressing his supreme Lord Sri Ram, and it is a common strand running in all of Tulsidas’ prayers.

Now, one thing is to be observed here. Tulsidas was a great devotee of Lord Ram, and he had vowed not to seek anything from anyone else but his Lord Ram. This fact is evident in umpteen numbers of verses of Uttar Kand of Kavitawali as well as in Vinai Patrika. So then why would Tulsidas seek anything from Shiva or even pray to the latter? There are two primary reasons for doing so—

(i) Lord Shiva is the Lord God, the deity whom Lord Ram has himself praised and offered his worship. This is clear in Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Doha no. 2 and its preceding Chaupai line nos. 4-8. The occasion was Lord Ram getting a bridge constructed over the ocean so that his army of monkeys and bears could cross over to Lanka, the island of demons, where the Lord's wife Sita was held captive by the demon king Ravana. Lord Ram had always regarded Lord Shiva as his revered deity and so he established a 'Shiva Lingam', a symbol of Shiva in order to offer his obeisance to the Lord before starting to cross the ocean. On this occasion, Lord Ram has expressly said that if anyone wants to have devotion for him, i.e. for Lord Ram, then that person must also please Lord Shiva first because it is not possible to please Lord Ram without pleasing Shiva. Therefore, Tulsidas rightly offers his obeisance to Lord Shiva about whom his own preferred Lord, Sri Ram, has said such a thing.

(ii) Tulsidas wishes to honour all forms of the Divinity because he sees uniformity in this diversity—i.e. he sees his own Lord Sri Ram in all the forms in which the Supreme Being is worshipped and honoured. In this universal view of Divinity, Lord Shiva occupies a special place in the pantheon of gods—because the personified form of the Supreme Being, i.e. Lord Ram, has specifically selected Shiva over all other forms of the Lord God to offer his obeisance and praises as pointed out in the above paragraph.

<sup>2</sup>Tulsidas had lived in Kashi for a considerable period of his life. He had observed that the people there used to worship so many sundry gods and deities instead of focusing their attention on Lord Shiva. This is the habit of the inhabitants of Kashi in spite of the well-known fact that Kashi is the terrestrial abode of Shiva, and it is here that the Lord roams around in the cremation ground granting liberation and deliverance to the dying person by uttering the holy name of Lord Ram in his ears.

Tulsidas was perplexed at their stupidity. But he feared that if he openly told the public that they are following the wrong path, are ill-advised, and are unnecessarily wasting their time and energy, he would face their wrath and scorn because no one wishes to be told that he is wrong. But at the same time they ought to be warned. So, Tulsidas chose to address and admonish himself—as no one can then accuse him of lecturing them.

This is his unique style of writing—he accuses himself of wrong-doing instead of pointing fingers at others to avoid any unsavoury developments. If anyone comes to accost him, accusing him of finding faults with others and pretending to be a holy cow himself, Tulsidas can easily say that he was scolding his own self and no one else. So the offended person would find no ground to start a fight with him.

This clever ploy helped the wise saint to escape unnecessary problems that may have resulted from his often sarcastic and straightforward comments on the many ills plaguing the society about which he had highlighted in his writings.]

जात जरे सब लोक बिलोकि तिलोचन सो बिषु लोकि लियो है।  
पान कियो बिषु, भूषन भो, करुनाबरुनालय साईँ-हियो है।।  
मेरोइ फोरिबे जोगु कपारु, किधौ कछु काहूँ लखाइ दियो है।  
काहे न कान करौ बिनती तुलसी कलिकाल बेहाल कियो है।।157।।



157. jāta jarē saba lōka bilōki tilōcana sō biśu lōki liyō hai.  
 pāna kiyō biśu, bhūśana bhō, karunābarunālaya sā'im̐-hiyō hai..  
 mērō'i phōribē jōgu kapāru, kidhaur̐ kachu kāhūm̐ lakhā'i diyō hai.  
 kāhē na kāna karau binatī tulasī kalikāla bēhāla kiyō hai..157..

Verse no. 7/157—Seeing that the entire creation was being scalded by the heat of the terrible poison (that had emerged on churning of the ocean), the 3-eyed Lord Shiva pounced upon and snatched it, and drank it quickly (in order to save the world from being scalded and scorched alive by its horrible corroding affects). This is why that venom became his ornament<sup>1</sup>.

'Oh Lord! Your heart is an ocean of mercy and kindness. So I don't understand whether it is my own ill-luck or if someone has pointed out my excessive lowliness and great shortcomings to you that (inspite of your renowned benevolent nature and inherent habit of looking after the welfare of all who seek from you or even as much as remember you) you are not paying any heed to me (Tulsidas) though I am being tormented by the horrors of Kaliyug. [Why have you become stone-hearted for me when you are reputed to be the Lord of a merciful and benevolent heart? Oh Lord, please be kind to me and hear my prayer to extricate me from the grave situation that I am finding myself in due to Kaliyug.]'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The Gods and the Demons had churned the ocean in search of Amrit, the elixir of eternity and bliss. Many things came out of the ocean because of this churning, and a fierce poison called 'Halaahal' was one among them. Now, if that poison had fallen on the ground it would have burnt everything like boiled oil falling on a person's hand. The merciful Lord Shiva lost no time, cupped it up and took one long breath, invoked the holy name of Lord Ram which he knew would protect him from the poison's harmful affects, and gulped it. As soon as he did it he realised that the entire creation is harboured in his belly in a nascent, subtle and seed-like form, and therefore if this poison enters his stomach it will burn everything up. So the Lord kept the poison in his throat. The throat thus became purple due to the severity of the poison. Since then Shiva became known as 'NeelKanth', the Lord with a blue-tinged throat. So the poison that would have otherwise killed all transformed itself into a decorative blue colour that adorns the throat of Shiva.]

खायो कालकूट भयो अजर अमर तनु,  
 भवनु मसानु, गथ गाठरी गरदकी ।  
 डमरु कपालु कर, भूषन कराल ब्याल,  
 बावरे बड़ेकी रीझ बाहन बरदकी ।।  
 तुलसी बिसाल गोरे गात बिलसति भूति,  
 मानो हिमगिरि चारु चाँदनी सरदकी ।  
 अर्थ-धर्म-काम-मोच्छ बसत बिलोकनिमें,  
 कासी करामाति जोगी जागति मरदकी ।।158 ।।

158. khāyō kālakūṭu bhayō ajara amara tanu,  
 bhavanu masānu, gatha gāṭharī garadakī.  
 ḍamarū kapālu kara, bhūśana karāla byāla,  
 bāvarē barēkī rījha bāhana baradakī..  
 tulasī bisāla gōrē gāta bilasati bhūti,

mānō himagiri cāru cāmḍanī saradakī.  
 artha-dharma-kāma-mōccha basata bilōkanimēm,  
 kāsī karāmāti jōgī jāgati maradakī..158..

Verse no. 7/158—Shiva had drunk the poison (known as ‘Halaahal’) that was as terrible as death itself, but miraculously his body had become eternal and free of all ailments<sup>1</sup>.

The cremation ground is his normal habitat, and a bag-full of ash from the fire sacrifice is his only asset. Terrible serpents are his ornaments, and that crazy<sup>2</sup> Shiva prefers to mount a bull.

Tulsidas says—Ash adorns his large, fair complexioned body, and it looks like a full moon’s light falling on the Himalayas. [Shiva’s abode is in Mt. Kailash in the Himalayas. Since his body is smeared in white ash, it appears to resemble the snow-covered mountains during the full moon night.]

Artha, Dharma, Kaam, Moksha<sup>2</sup> are found in his glances. [That is, all these four legendary rewards of good effort and noble life are available just by the mere glance of Lord Shiva.]

The magical deeds of magnificent dimensions, deeds that are unbelievable but true, stellar acts of charity, benevolence and magnanimity of that maverick Gentleman Ascetic (i.e. Shiva—**marada jōgī**) are being revealed in Kashi<sup>3</sup>.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>It is normally expected that when anyone drinks poison, especially one that is excessively corrosive and death-like as the Halaahal, all the internal organs of the body would burn and dissolve in this liquid, and that person dies a horrible death. But in the case of Shiva a miraculous thing happened: this poison only strengthened his body from the within and the without, and enhanced its immunity from disease and the normal wear and tear that comes with age. After drinking this poison his body was not affected by external environment such as heat and cold, enabling Shiva to remain naked; he overcame hunger and could sit in meditation for thousands of years without any signs of emaciation, nor would he desire delectable things to eat, remaining contented with eating intoxicating herbs such as Dhatura and Bhaang which had no harmful affect on him; he became immune to snake bites. So, what should have been a bane transformed into a blessing for him. It turned him into a true ascetic who could actually practice the stern principles as laid down in the scriptures for a life of a reclusive hermit.

<sup>2</sup>The word ‘crazy’ has been used for Lord Shiva not to insult or disparage the Lord in any way, but simply to stress that his ways are at odds with the normally accepted ways of gods. This word has been used for Shiva by Parvati’s mother also when she first saw Shiva when the Lord had gone to marry Parvati—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 96; and Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 97.

<sup>3</sup>These are the four rewards that are obtained by doing meritorious deeds. ‘Artha’ means financial wellbeing, ‘Dharma’ means being honoured for leading a righteous life in accordance to the laws established in the scriptures, ‘Kaam’ means being able to attain fulfilment of wishes, and ‘Moksha’ means final liberation and deliverance from the horrors of life and death.

<sup>3</sup>It is believed that in Kashi or the city of Varanasi, which is regarded as the terrestrial abode of Shiva, the Lord roams around and grants deliverance to the dying person by uttering Lord Ram’s holy name in his or her ears. In this pilgrim city’s cremation ground too, Lord Shiva roams around uttering the name of Lord Ram in the ears of corpses to provide liberation to the soul of the dead person.

It is very interesting to note here that only a ‘dead person’ is brought to the cremation ground, and it is said that Shiva utters Lord Ram’s name in his ears to give it salvation. What does it imply? It means that though the body is dead, the soul lives and hovers over it in the hope that it would re-enter it and become alive once again so as to continue enjoying the innumerable comforts and pleasures of the sense objects of the material world around it. So Lord Shiva, the great and enlightened ascetic, sees this as a chance to prevent the soul from falling back in the grinding mill of birth and death by providing it deliverance at once. Its like blocking the soul’s passage back to the vicious cycle of a new birth and death once again.]

पिंगल जटाकलापु माथेपै पुनीत आपु,  
पावक नैना प्रताप भूपर बरत है।  
लोयन बिसाल लाल, सोहै बालचंद्र भाल,  
कंठ कालकूट, ब्याल-भूषन धरत है।।  
सुंदर दिगंबर, बिभूति गात, भाँग खात,  
रूरे सुंगी पूरें काल-कंटक हरत हैं।  
देत न अघात रीझि, जात पात आकहीकें  
भोरानाथ जोगी जब औढर ढरत हैं।।159।।

159. piṅgala jaṭākālāpu māthēpai punīta āpu,  
pāvaka nainā pratāpa bhrūpara barata hai.  
lōyana bisāla lāla, sōhai bālacandra bhāla,  
kaṇṭha kālakūṭu, byāla-bhūśana dharata hai..  
suṁdara digambara, bibhūti gāta, bhāmṅa khāta,  
rūrē sṛṅgī pūrēm kāla-kaṇṭaka harata haim.  
dēta na aghāta rījhi, jāta pāta ākahīkēm  
bhōrānātha jōgī jaba auḍhara ḍharata haim..159..

Verse no. 7/159—The huge crown of long tresses that are matted together into a thick spiral on his head are of a yellowish hue or golden in colour. [This alludes to the golden colour of the snow-covered mountains when the first rays of the sun falls upon them early in the morning when the sun rises.]

The river Ganges, which is the purest and the holiest of all the rivers (as it originates in the toe of Lord Vishnu in the heaven and then descended upon earth) adorns his head (because Lord Shiva had accepted it on his head when it first descended upon earth). [The story goes that the Gods led by Brahma the creator requested Shiva to bear the Ganges on his head and then allow it to flow gradually and slowly, in narrow streams, to earth because they feared that if the river was allowed to fall directly on earth from the enormous height of the heaven it would break the earth into two by the sheer force of its hitting it like the blow of a huge sledge-hammer.]

The splendour, radiance and glow of the great ‘fire’ that burns subtly in his eyes is reflected brightly on his eye-brows. [That is, Lord’s eyebrows and forehead are aglow with a soft light that emanates from the fire element that is inherently present in his eye, especially the third eye located in the middle of the forehead.]

His eyes are large and reddish (because of the fire burning inside them). [In other words, Lord Shiva’s eyes look like large receptacles of fire. It also implies that it is not wise to play fools with Shiva because if he gets angry and looks anyone with

a stern eye, let it be known that the object of his wrath would be reduced to ashes. One example of this actually happening is that of Kamdeo, the god of passion and lust, who had tried his dirty tricks upon Shiva to disturb the Lord's meditation, so much annoying him that he angrily opened his third eye which instantly reduced Kamdeo to ashes. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1-6 that precedes Doha no. 87.]

The Lord bears the crescent moon of the second night (the 2<sup>nd</sup> night after the new moon) on his forehead, and it looks magnificent in its nestling place there.

The terrible death-like-poison (known as the Halaahal) is contained in his throat, and he is wearing ornaments consisting of serpents.

His form is most adorable inspite of it being 'Digambar' or without any clothes on it. He adorns it by smearing it with ash.

His habits are most odd—for he eats Bhaang (cannabis sativa), and uses a hollowed-out horn (of a wild animal) as a bugle with which he makes a sound that chases away all the fears of 'Kaal', or death and deadly circumstances. [Normally, gods use a conch-shell for this purpose. But odd as he is, Shiva uses a horn of an animal such as a bull or a rhinoceros to make a booming sound to announce his arrival, and it is enough to frighten away all the evil-mongers of Kaliyug and instill a sense of fearlessness in the heart of his devotees.]

It is a wonderment that when that simple-hearted Yogi (ascetic) becomes greatly pleased, he does not feel tired of giving away boons liberally to others without distinguishing between them and their caste, creed or social status, while himself remaining contented with the leaves of 'swallow-wart' plant (the 'Aak').

[Note—The most unconventional form of Shiva has been elaborately narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, (i) Chaupai line nos. 1-5 that precedes Doha no. 92; (ii) Chaupai line no. 8 and Chanda line nos. 1-2 that precede Doha no. 95; (iii) Doha no. 79 and Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes it.]

देत संपदासमेत श्रीनिकेत जाचकनि,  
भवन बिभूति-भाँग, बृभष बहनु है।  
नाम बामदेव दाहिनो सदा असंग रंग  
अर्द्ध अंग अंगना, अनंगको महनु है।।  
तुलसी महेसको प्रभाव भावहीं सुगम  
निगम-अगमहूको जानिबो गहनु है।  
भेष तौ भिखारिको भयंकररूप संकर  
दयाल दीनबंधु दानि दारिद्रहनु है।।160।।

160. dēta sampadāsamēta śrīnikēta jācakani,  
bhavana bibhūti-bhāmṅa, br̥bhaśa bahanu hai.  
nāma bāmadēva dāhinō sadā asaṅga raṅga  
ard'dha aṅga aṅganā, anaṅgakō mahanu hai..  
tulasī mahēsakō prabhāva bhāvahīm sugama  
nigama-agamahūkō jānibō gahanu hai.  
bhēśa tau bhikhārikō bhayaṅkararūpa saṅkara  
dayāla dīnabandhu dāni dāridadahanu hai..160..

Verse no. 7/160—Lord Shiva is a especial Lord who has unique stellar and exemplary qualities that are paradoxical in nature but emphasise the glory and the greatness of the Lord by using the medium of contrast.

For instance, he is such a generous, liberal and magnanimous giver that when anyone seeks anything from him he is ready to grant him all his wishes and goes out of his way to add icing to the cake (as it were) by giving additional things not even asked for or expected, while himself he has nothing in his own home by way of material possession except ash of the fire sacrifice and Bhaang plants as his only asset or possession. Not only this, he rides upon a bull (instead of some magnificent chariot like the other gods of heaven).

Again, though one of his names is 'Baamdeo' which means the Lord who is always opposed and grave and sullen, one who is of a stern nature and difficult to please, but in practice he is the most benevolent and gracious Lord God known, the Lord who is always eager to help and provide succour.

Similarly, though he has a wife known as Parvati by his side, he is nevertheless a renowned recluse and an acclaimed ascetic who had crushed Kamdeo, the personified form of lust and passion, by reducing him to ashes. [So, while externally it appears that he enjoys the company of a woman, the fact is that internally he is a great hermit and ascetic par-excellence.]

Tulsidas says—such a 'Great God' (mahēsh) is accessible only thorough purified emotions, otherwise even the Vedas and other scriptures had great difficulty in knowing him. His attire is like a beggar and his general habits, lifestyle, companions and surroundings are very horrible, but nevertheless he is 'Shankar': One who is truthful, auspicious and a good doer of all.

The great Lord is merciful and compassionate, a friend of those in distress, the chief among donors, and the destroyer of all sorts of poverty and wants.

चाहै न अनंग-अरि एकौ अंग मागनेको  
 देबोई पै जानिये, सुभावसिद्ध बानि सो ।  
 बारि बुंद चारि त्रिपुरारि पर डारिये तौ  
 देत फल चारि, लेत सेवा साँची मानि सो ॥  
 तुलसी भरोसो न भवेस भोरानाथको तौ  
 कोटिक कलेस करौ, मरौ छार छानि सो ।  
 दारिद दमन दुख-दोष दाह दावानल  
 दुनी न दयाल दूजो दानि सूलपानि-सो ॥१६१॥

161. cāhai na anaṅga-ari ēkau aṅga māganēkō  
 dēbō'ī pai jāniyē, subhāvasid'dha bāni sō.  
 bāri buṁda cāri tripurāri para ḍāriyē tau  
 dēta phala cāri, lēta sēvā sām'cī māni sō..  
 tulasī bharōsō na bhavēsa bhōrānāthakō tau  
 kōṭika kalēsa karau, marau chāra chāni sō.  
 dārida damana dukha-dōśa dāha dāvānala  
 dunī na dayāla dūjō dāni sūlapāni-sō..161..

Verse no. 7/161—[Highlighting the nature of Lord Shiva to give exceptionally liberally, without expecting anything in return, Tulsidas says—] The Lord, who had vanquished the pride and ego of Madan (i.e. Kamdeo, the god of passion and desires who had been so arrogant that he had thought that he would be able to disturb Lord Shiva's meditation by inciting lust and passion in the Lord, as a result of which the Lord had burnt him to death for his arrogance and temerity), does not expect any gift or offering from his alms-seekers.

He only knows to give—this is his natural habit. If any one drops even four drops of water on him (as a token of paying his obeisance and making a humble offering), the Lord regards this as a true form of worship, and he feels so obliged towards the worshipper that in return gives away to him the four legendary fruits or rewards (consisting of Artha, Dharma, Kaam, Moksha which have been explained in previous verses).

Therefore, Tulsidas says— 'If you do not rely on the Lord of the Universe, the 'simple-hearted' Shiva (*bhōrānātha*), you might endure crores of sufferings (by undertaking tedious exercises such as doing sacrifices, penances, fastings, Yoga, austerities, pilgrimage etc.) but you will still bite the dust (i.e. all your sufferings and efforts would be in vain).

Verily I say that in this world there is no one compared to the trident-holding Lord Shiva as far as removal of poverty and wants are concerned. Not only this, there is no comparison to Shiva as the Lord who can burn all the faults, sins and evils (of Kaliyug, the present era and the one which is most troublesome) like a huge forest-fire (that, once provoked, burns relentlessly to reduce vast stretches of wild forest to ashes). [That is, if Lord Shiva becomes angry and decides to root out turpitude, corruption, vices, sins and evil then there is no stopping him.]'

काहेको अनेक देव सेवत जागै मसान  
खोवत अपान, सठ! होत हठि प्रेत रे।  
काहेको उपाय कोटि करत, मरत धाय,  
जाचत नरेस देस-देसके, अचेतरे॥  
तुलसी प्रतीति बिनु त्यागै तैं प्रयाग तनु,  
धनहीके हेतदान देत कुरुखेत रे।  
पात द्वे धतूरेके दै, भोरै कै, भवेससौं,  
सुरेसहूकी संपदा सुभायसौं न लेत रे॥162॥

162. *kāhēkō anēka dēva sēvata jāgai masāna*  
*khōvata apāna, saṭha! hōta haṭhi prēta rē.*  
*kāhēkō upāya kōṭi karata, marata dhāya,*  
*jācata narēsa dēsa-dēsakē, acētarē..*  
*tulasī pratīti binu tyāgai taim prayāga tanu,*  
*dhanahikē hētaḍāna dēta kurukhēta rē.*  
*pāta dvai dhatūrēkē dai, bhōrēm kai, bhavēsasōm,*  
*surēsahūkī sampadā subhāyasōm na lēta rē..162..*

Verse no. 7/162—[This verse is rich in sarcasm. Tulsidas chides all those people who engage themselves in following countless religious paths, do countless rituals and worship manifold gods and goddesses, blindly following others out of their own stupidity and ignorance, just to fulfil their spiritual or worldly needs, or overcome the fear of their sins, or just to derive some sort of psychological solace that they are doing some good religious duty, but without understanding that all this is a waste of time, energy and money.

While living in Kashi Tulsidas had been observing that people were so ignorant and stupid that though the scriptures had been saying in unequivocal terms and stressing repeatedly that Kashi is the terrestrial abode of Lord Shiva where the Lord roams around granting free largesse to all those who just seek from him, ready to grant anything by way of worldly gains as well as spiritual welfare by way of

liberation and deliverance, such foolish people ignore this advice of the scriptures and instead seek to fulfil their desires and wishes by worshipping countless gods and goddess of every imaginable name, form and antecedent, paying their obeisance to every nook and corner deity, bowing their head at every niche and alcove. What is the sense and the logic in blindly following this practice?

Then Tulsidas broadens his horizon and chides those people who go to other pilgrim places, leaving Kashi aside, in the hope of spiritual solace and fulfilment of their wishes. He cites two such places. One is 'Prayag', the confluence of the three holy rivers Ganges, Yamuna and Saraswati, where people go to live in their old age in the hope that they would die there and attain salvation. Another pilgrim place is 'Kurushetra' where they go to make donations and alms-giving in the hope that they would be rewarded for their charity by the bounty of more money that is manifold times more than what they have given.

Now in this verse Tulsidas asks these people why are they so stupid; why can't they rely on Lord Shiva for their sure-shot spiritual welfare and ensured salvation, as well as to get all their wishes for worldly gains fulfilled, instead of going to far-flung places where such rewards are uncertain and may be just merely hearsay.]

'Oh (you stupid fellow)! Why do you serve so many Gods and spend your time doing Tantrik rituals in the cremation grounds? Oh you idiot! Why do you put your good name to shame (by following these meaningless practices) and willingly become a ghost or evil spirit? Oh you ignorant fellow, the block-head! Why do you run about doing crores (countless; literally hundreds of thousands) of rituals and beg before kings of different denominations and places?'

Tulsidas continues—'You leave you body (i.e. die) in Prayag in a mere mechanical, perfunctory manner, just as a formal ritualistic exercise due to peer pressure, without having any sincere belief or a firm conviction (about the mystical ability of the holy river Ganges to grant liberation and deliverance to those who have the good fortune to serve it and take a dip in its purifying waters).

[That is, you, in either ignorance or stupidity, think that by merely living in Prayag you will find liberation and deliverance. Oh you nut of a fellow! Don't you know that hundreds and thousands of local residents have been dying there ever since civilisation dawned, but do they get this spiritual relief? Absolutely 'NO'. It is possible only if you have firm faith in the power of river Ganges to provide liberation to the soul, and only if you diligently maintain internal and external purity that you can expect this reward. Not by simply dipping and washing clothes in the river in lieu of bathing at home!

Now, if going to Prayag to find deliverance by serving Ganges was your objective, then why did you not come to Kashi where the same benefit is available, and in addition to it there is the rare bonus of the presence of Lord Shiva here who ensures that all those who die on the banks of the river or are brought there for cremation get liberation and deliverance. Lord Shiva achieves this marvellous feat by uttering the holy name of Lord Ram in the ear of the dying person. So, can't you see that even if you lack proper conviction in the mystical ability of river Ganges in providing deliverance, you have an insurance in Kashi by way of Lord Shiva. Therefore, aren't you utterly a block-head to make a wrong choice out of your ignorance and stupidity?]

Then, some of you go to Kurushetra to make donations and give alms as charity in the hope that this religious activity would reward you with manifold returns

by way of monetary gain, and that you will get more than what you have given out. (Say, what will you gain from all this ?).

[Once again, if worldly gain was your aim in travelling all the way to Kurushetra to make charity in the hope that you will be rewarded multiple times more than your expenditure, then its almost like a business. If it to be so, then what better bargain you had than coming to Kashi and asking Shiva for your wants, because Shiva wouldn't have taken a dime from you but would have given to you in bountiful, much more than you ever expected. And all this at no cost of investment as compared to Kurushetra where first you have to spend from your pocket by way of charity and then only would you be reimbursed.

Don't you know that if you had been wise and come to Kashi to seek from Shiva, then you would be the richer by the four legendary fruits or rewards of 'Artha', 'Dharma', 'Kaam' and 'Moksha', all rolled into one magnificent largesse, which you won't get at Kurushetra.]

Oh, why don't you offer two leaves of the Dhatura plant to the Lord of creation ('bhavēsa'=Shiva) and trick him into giving you the wealth of Indra (i.e. the king of Gods) so easily?

[Say, why don't you act wisely if attaining fulfilment of your worldly wishes is the aim? I am telling you an easy way. Lord Shiva is so simple-hearted that he will be pleased just if you offer mere two leaves of the Dhatura plant to him, because the Lord will think that you are extremely poor and can't afford more costly offering. So, in his zeal to care for his devotee and leave him in no want, Lord Shiva would grant you so much wealth and prosperity and majesty and powers to you that you will be compared with the king of gods known as Indra. So therefore, aren't you surely stupid of the highest order to seek elsewhere and worship so many gods instead of the Great God of all, i.e. Lord God Shiva.]

### Rewards granted by Lord Shivā to His Devotees

स्यंदन, गयंद, बाजिराजि, भले भले भट,  
 धन-धाम-निकर, करनिहूँ न पूजै क्वै ।  
 बनिता बिनीत, पूत पावन सोहावन, औ  
 बिनय, बिबेक, बिद्या सुभग सरीर ज्वै ॥  
 इहाँ ऐसो सुख, परलोक सिवलोक ओक,  
 जाको फल तुलसी सो सुनौ सावधान है ।  
 जानै, बिनु जानै, कै रिसानै, केलि कबहुँक  
 सिवहि चढ़ाए हैहैं बेलके पतौवा द्वै ॥163॥

163. syandana, gayanda, bājirāji, bhalē bhalē bhaṭa,  
 dhana-dhāma-nikara, karanihūṁ na pūjai kvai.  
 banitā binīta, pūta pāvana sōhāvana, au  
 binaya, bibēka, bidyā subhaga sarīra jvai..  
 ihām̐ aisō sukha, paralōka sivalōka ōka,  
 jākō phala tulasī sō sunau sāvadhāna hvai.  
 jānēm, binu jānēm, kai risānēm, kēli kabahum̐ka  
 sivahi caṛhā'ē hvaihaiṁ bēlakē patauvā dvai..163..

Verse no. 7/163—[This verse builds upon the idea expressed in verse no. 162. Here, Tulisdas is talking about the immense worldly achievement, success, powers, majesty,



prosperity and wealth that are bestowed upon a Shiva's devotee to impress upon the doubting people, who are still not certain about the gains got by worshipping Lord Shiva, the importance of worshipping the Lord—]

'A queue of chariots, elephants and horses are standing at his place (door-way), there is an abundance of excellent warriors, wealth and property at his command, and no one can compare himself with his deeds and actions (in nobility). His wife is very courteous, son very righteous and noble, and he has a pleasant manner, wisdom, education and a handsome and healthy body.'

Tulsidas says that a Shiva's devotee has all this (the above described fortunes and good-luck) in this world, and even after death he finds abode in heaven (Lord Shiva's abode).

Now, says Tulsidas, listen carefully and pay attention to what I say—'All these rewards were made available to this 'devotee' because in some earlier time he had humbly offered two leaves of the Bel tree (the leaves of the wood-apple tree) to Lord Shiva. He may have done it willingly and consciously (as a token of paying his obeisance to the Lord as he was so poor that he couldn't afford anything else or better, but he had the firm faith that Lord Shiva gives credence to the emotions of the heart more than the physical nature of the offering or symbol of respect paid to him). Or else, it may be that this gentleman had done this (offering of the leaves) without any specific purpose in mind (i.e. neither did he had any desire to offer worship nor had any wish of having any boon from the Lord in return; he simply did it mechanically and ritualistically because he had heard others doing it, without actually being aware of whom he is indirectly worshipping or the importance of this token worship).

But nonetheless, Lord Shiva was overwhelmed with gratitude for this offering of the 'devotee', and without minding whether or not he offered the two leaves of the Bel tree to the Lord to worship the Lord or did it simply in a perfunctory manner as a copy-cat act, the Lord handsomely rewarded the person who offered these two leaves to him!

[This fellow who offered the leaves to Lord Shiva may not have been a 'regular devotee' as the word is conventionally understood to mean. May be he just offered the leaves because he had to offer something when he had visited a shrine of Lord Shiva, and not finding anything else he plucked two leaves from the nearby tree and offered it to the Lord. But nevertheless, Lord Shiva decided to reward him in ample terms, in the way enumerated herein above.]

[Note—The central idea in this verse is that Lord Shiva is very easy to please. Even a few pieces of the Bel leaves offered to him without any actual devotion will make the Lord so happy and grateful that he would surely reward the person who offered the leaves. This is because Shiva is highly conscious of his reputation of generosity and benevolence that he over does it and tries to repay his devotees with abundant boons which are totally out of proportion to the prayers offered to him by them. The rewards are multiple times more than what normally they should have been.]

रति-सी खनि, सिंधुमेखला अवनि पति  
 औनिप अनेक ठड़े हाथ जोरि हारि कै।  
 संपदा-समाज देखि लाज सुरराजहूकें  
 सुख सब बिधि बिधि दीन्हे हैं, सवाँरि कै॥  
 इहाँ ऐसी सुख, सुरलोक सुरनाथपद,  
 जाको फल तुलसी सो कहैगो बिचारि कै।  
 आकके पतौआ चारि, फूल कै धतूरेके द्वै

दीन्हें हैहैं बारक पुरारिपर डारिकै ।।164 ।।

164. rati-sī ravani, sindhumēkhalā avani pati  
aunipa anēka ṭhārḥē hātha jōri hāri kai.  
sampadā-samāja dēkhi lāja surarājahūkēm  
sukha saba bidhi bidhi dīnhē haiṁ, savām̐ri kai..  
ihām̐ aisō sukha, suralōka suranāthapada,  
jākō phala tulasī sō kahaigō bicāri kai.  
ākakē patau'ā cāri, phūla kai dhatūrēkē dvai  
dīnhēm hvaihaiṁ bāraka purāripara ḍārikai..164..

Verse no. 7/164— [Continuing his description of Shiva's nature of generosity towards his devotees, Tulsidas says—]

'He (the devotee) has a wife as beautiful as Rati (who was the wife of Kamdeo, the most beautiful lady in the heaven), he is the King of the continent surrounded by the ocean (i.e. he becomes like an Emperor), and many kings and nobles stand before him in attendance with hands held together in supplication after they had been defeated and conquered by the devotee (who becomes invincible and an un-opposed ruler of the realm). Even Indra, the king of gods, feels ashamed at seeing his prosperity, pomp, royal paraphernalia, regal glamour and majestic grandeur, and it appears that the Creator had assembled all the best of things for his worldly comfort.'

Now, Tulsidas explores the reason behind such exceptional level of glory and majesty that came to this person, and he concludes thus—'A person who has all these and many other types of comforts and rewards in this world (i.e. he lives like a veritable emperor while alive), and even after death he attains the status of Indra (i.e. after death he goes straight to heaven and enjoys the comforts of heaven like its king called Indra)—well, after due consideration, analysis and deep thought, I (Tulsidas) have come to the conclusion that surely this person must have offered four leaves of the 'Aak plant' (a medicinal herb called *Catotropis Gigantia* or swallow-wart) or two flowers of 'Dhatura plant' (an intoxicating herb called Thorn Apple or *Datura Stramonium*) to Lord Shiva some time in the past, the benefit of which he is enjoying now.'

### Tulsidas' Bitter Experience in Vārānasi

देवसरि सेवौ बामदेव गाउँ रावरेहीं  
नाम रामहीके मागि उदर भरत हौं ।  
दीबे जोग तुलसी न लेत काहूको कछुक,  
लिखी न भलाइ भाल, पोच न करत हौं ।।  
एते पर हूँ जो कोऊ रावरो है जोर करै,  
ताको जोर, देव! दीन द्वारें गुदरत हौं ।  
पाइ कै उराहनो उराहनो न दीजो मोहि,  
कालकला कासीनाथ कहें निबरत हौं ।।165 ।।

165. dēvasari sēvaum̐ bāmadēva gā'um̐ rāvarēhīm̐  
nāma rāmahīkē māgi udara bharata haum̐.  
dībē jōga tulasī na lēta kāhūkō kachuka,  
likhī na bhalā'i bhāla, pōca na karata haum̐..

ētē para hūm̐ jō kō'ū rāvarō hvai jōra karai,  
 tākō jōra, dēva! dīna dvārēm gudarata haum̐.  
 pā'i kai urāhanō urāhanō na dījō mōhi,  
 kālakalā kāsīnātha kahēm nibarata haum̐..165..

Verse no. 7/165—[Tulsidas had spent a considerable part of his later life at Varanasi. The major part of his magnum opus known as the epic book 'Ram Charit Manas', as well as all the other major books of his, including Kavitawali, were written while he lived at Varanasi. Perhaps this is the reason why Tulsidas has devoted many verses of Kavitawali's Uttar Kand in praising the glory of river Ganges and of Lord Shiva because Varanasi is reputed as being the terrestrial abode of Lord Shiva. He has even gone to the extent of exhorting people to come to Varanasi instead of going to other pilgrim places such as Prayag or Kurushetra to fulfil their worldly and spiritual needs as is clear in verse no. 162 herein above.

But the irony is that the Pundits, the Brahmins and the Priests who lived in Varanasi became jealous of Tulsidas' popularity, high spiritual level and devotional reach, and the 'truth' that he was telling because it impinged on the web of fraud and deceit that they had woven to exploit innocent pilgrims and emotions of devotees to fulfil their vested interests. Tulsidas' teachings affected their commercialisation of religion and organised way of misleading people so that their purses got richer and fatter. Hence, they resisted Tulsidas and did their best to torment him so that, if nothing else, then at least he runs away from the place. It is documented that they even went to the extent of sending thieves to steal the saint's manuscripts of the holy books he had so painstakingly written, and threw some of them in the water of river Ganges. But no matter how hard they tried, all their nefarious designs were overcome by Tulsidas' great patrons—Lord Ram and Lord Shiva who always afforded their protection to him. But nevertheless, it was often that this great immortal saint of all times grew frustrated and felt dejected. So, he has bemoaned about his condition and the situation prevailing in Varanasi when he wrote this verse no. 165.

To compound his problems as narrated in verse no. 165 here, Tulsidas developed some pain in his arms which had become quite unbearable. So in the next verse nos. 166-168 he laments about it and seeks Lord Shiva's intervention to provide relief from his sufferings.

The point to note here is that Tulsidas has prayed to and sought Lord Shiva's intervention to provide him relief from his miseries instead of praying to Lord Ram who was his beloved and chosen deity whom he loved and revered like no one else. The reasons are obvious: (i) Lord Shiva is the presiding deity of Varanasi where Tulsidas lived at that time, and it is quite possible that Tulsidas guessed that he may have inadvertently committed some mistake that has annoyed Shiva that the latter is punishing him by way of inflicting miseries and grief on him. For he was very sure that his own Lord, Sri Ram, is so merciful that the Lord wouldn't ever think of creating a situation which pains his trusted and devoted devotee Tulsidas. So it surely must be Shiva. (ii) Even Lord Ram has himself said that if one were to have devotion for the Lord then it is necessary for the worshipper to first pay his obeisance to Lord Shiva whom Lord Ram has himself worshipped. This is clear in Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, from Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 2—to Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 3.]

Tulsidas addresses Lord Shiva, the patron deity of Varanasi, and pleads with him to protect him from his tormentors and sufferings.

He prays as follows—'Oh Lord Baamdeo'<sup>1</sup> (one of the names of Lord Shiva)! I stay in your city (Varanasi), drink the holy water of Ganges (or, serve Ganges) and beg for morsels of food by taking the name of Lord Sri Ram. [I don't cheat others; I don't pretend to a holy man with lots of pretensions and airs about me to meet my monetary requirements. I honestly invoke the name of the Lord God, i.e. Lord Ram, to feed my stomach and meet my basic requirements.]

If this Tulsidas can't give anything to anybody (i.e. cannot make donations or give alms because he is poor and without resources), he at least never takes anything from them (by deceit, conceit, pretensions, theft, falsehood and other evil methods). Though I may not be lucky enough to have good fortune and wherewithals for worldly comfort and pleasure, but I do not commit any crimes or sins either to furnish for myself and provide for me by any foul means of either hook or by crook.

Inspite of this (i.e. though I live a conscientious life of scruples), if any person, who ironically calls himself your devotee, forcefully torments me and makes me suffer (for no fault of mine), then I humbly submit my sufferings at your door-step (before you)<sup>2</sup>.

Oh Lord of Kashi (Varanasi; 'kāśīnātha')! If Lord Sri Ram complains to you that you are neglecting his (Ram's) devotee, please do not accuse me (that I went to complain about my sufferings to my beloved Lord Ram who also happens to be your Lord as well, by telling me that I should have told you about my problems before approaching the Supreme Lord Sri Ram in this connection—because now that I have petitioned you with my problems, you can't say that I did not tell you).

That is why I am informing you of the evil deeds of Kaal (Kaliyug or the present times that has metamorphosed itself in the form of your city's residents and their deeds). Having done so, I shall now now rest in peace (because the ball is now in your court, and I am sure that after all that I have stated herein above you shall pay heed to my application with the greatest of compassion and grace).<sup>3</sup>

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Tulsidas has cleverly selected this word 'bāmadēva' while addressing Lord Shiva to clearly indicate that the Shiva whom Lord Ram has so highly praised and worshipped himself is surely not so hard-hearted or stern that he would put Tulsidas to so much trouble. Hence, it must be the wrathful aspect of Shiva, or that personality of Shiva which has made him a merciless annihilator of the world. Remember: In the Trinity of Gods it is Shiva as Rudra who is the 'concluder' or 'annihilator' of creation. As such it is evident that Shiva's angry facet knows no mercy, because otherwise Shiva won't be able to finish-off the creation if he started showing mercy and compassion on the suffering creatures who are suffering out of their own misdeeds and sins and need severe punishment to clear the scum of their like from polluting the seed of creation.

In other words, the very fact that Tulsidas suffers for whatso reason in Shiva's abode at Varanasi, inspite of living most honourable and conscientious life as best as he could, it clearly means that in some way he has ruffled Shiva and incurred his wrath. Since the inhabitants of Varanasi are like the subjects of a king and obey their master's orders, so the Pundits and others who were tormenting him had been instructed by Lord Shiva in his angry and opposed form as 'Baamdeo' to keep harassing Tulsidas as a subtle means of punishment.

<sup>2</sup>Tulsidas decided that it is useless to argue and resist his tormentors at Varanasi. All of them will conspire and group against him and cause him more trouble. It is always wiser to approach the 'ruler of the city', the 'king', to seek protection and justice when a person finds that he is alone and outnumbered by the mad crowd of selfish men who are hell-bent to torment him because they know he is alone and an

outsider without local help. And normally it is seen that honest and truthful people often find themselves alone and cornered in the midst of corrupt and unscrupulous people who feel that he is an intruder amongst them and that his continuous presence in their community would interfere with their evil lifestyle and money making machinery, for sooner or later the ordinary folks would discover their evil designs and turn towards this honest man for guidance, in which case their apple-cart would be upset.

Here, the ‘person’ or persons referred to by Tulsidas are the inhabitants or permanent residents of Kashi or Varanasi, such as the Pundits and Priests, who were jealous of Tulsidas and contrived all possible means to torment him and cause suffering to him. Since they pretended to be devotees of Lord Shiva simply by the virtue of their living in Kashi where Shiva is the presiding deity, and where all residents are expected to be loyal and faithful to the Lord just like the subjects of a king’s kingdom being loyal to their king, Tulsidas has presumed that these tormentors of him can’t act without permission of their Lord Shiva. There is a hidden sarcasm in this statement. Either it is that Lord Shiva has no control over the residents of his own city who are openly using his name to ride rough shod over others just like ruffian soldiers or selfish ministers of a careless king do, or otherwise these people don’t care about Lord Shiva nor fear him for punishment for tormenting others, especially the guests of the city of Varanasi. Remember: Tulsidas had come to stay in Varanasi from outside and therefore was a ‘guest’ of the city. Tulsidas wonders how come this is being allowed by the patron deity Lord Shiva; how is it possible that he, Tulsidas, who is a devotee of Lord Ram whom Shiva himself worships and who has never tried to harm a soul, is subjected to so much misery right under the nose of Shiva?

<sup>3</sup>Tulsidas kind of tells Lord Shiva that: ‘I am petitioning you to protect me from my tormentors just to observe protocol, as you, Shiva, are the resident deity of Kashi, and therefore I must first request you and pray to you.

Oh Lord, I too have become a resident of your city Kashi like the rest of the people here, and have been paying homage to you and honouring you as the deity whom my Lord Ram has so lavishly praised and honoured—refer: verse no. 166 herein below. I try not to interfere with anyone, and I mind my own business. In spite of all this I am continued to be tormented by the subjects of your city, its residents. I could have directly approached the Emperor, the Supreme Lord of all, i.e. Lord Ram to whom you yourself pay your obeisance, and it is absolutely certain that Lord Ram would have asked you why his trusted devotee by the name of Tulsidas is being subjected to so much harassment in your city Kashi, and why aren’t you looking into the matter. Thus chided by Lord Ram, you will be compelled to take action and reprimand and punish my offenders, but then you would ask me why I didn’t complain to you first before approaching the ‘Higher Authority, Lord Ram’.

So, I don’t wish to embarrass you in any manner because I have to live in your city of Kashi. But please Lord, rein-in these mischief mongers and free me from their harassment!’]

### Pain In Tulsidās’ Arms

चेरो रामराइको, सुजस सुनि तेरो, हर!  
 पाइ तर आइ रह्यौ सुरसस्तिर हौं ।  
 बामदेव! रामको सुभाव-सील जानियत  
 नातो नेह जानियत रघुबीर भीर हौं ॥  
 अधिभूत बेदन बिषम होत, भूतनाथ

तुलसी बिकल, पाहि! पचत कुपीर हौं ।  
 मारिये तौ अनायास कासीबास खास फल,  
 ज्याइये तौ कृपा करि निरुजसरीर हौं ।।166 ।।

166. cērō rāmarā'ikō, sujasa suni tērō, hara!  
 pā'i tara ā'i rahyaum̃ surasaritīra hauṃ.  
 bāmadēva! rāmakō subhāva-sīla jāniyata  
 nātō nēha jāniyata raghubīra bhīra hauṃ..  
 adhibhūta bēdana biśama hōta, bhūtanātha  
 tulasī bikala, pāhi! pacata kupīra hauṃ.  
 māriyē tau anāyāsa kāsibāsa khāsa phala,  
 jyā'iyē tau krpā kari nirujasarīra hauṃ..166..

Verse no. 7/166—'Oh Lord Har ('hara'; Shiva)! I am a servant (devotee) of Lord Sri Ram, and hearing about your glory, holy name and great divine powers, I have come to your feet and took up residence on the banks of river Ganges. [That is, I have come to live at Kashi after I heard about your glory and name.]<sup>1</sup>

Oh Lord Baamdeo ('bāmadēva'; Shiva)! You certainly know the kind, benevolent, merciful and courteous temperament of Lord Sri Ram and our (mine and Lord Ram's) affectionate relationship. I am afraid of (i.e. answerable to and devoted to) only Sri Ram. [That is, Lord Ram is my only Lord God and Deity. And like a faithful servant of an Emperor, I owe my allegiance strictly to Lord Ram.]

Oh Lord of the Ghosts (bhūtanātha; Shiva)! My physical body (a body called 'Adhibhautik' because it is gross and made primary of the 'earth element' besides the other four—water, air, sky, fire) is greatly suffering from a terrible pain (in my arms) which is making me agitated, tormented and extremely distressed. Please protect me. It is better to kill me (or let me die peacefully) so that I can reap the benefit of living in Kashi and dying here (because it is said that all those who die in Kashi are provided salvation by you, Lord Shiva).

But in case you want me to live, please make my body healthy (because my decrepit and diseased body has become too much of a burden for me, and you being a merciful Lord it does not behove of you that you allow the devotee of your own Lord, i.e. a devotee of Lord Sri Ram, who has come as a guest to live with you, to suffer so much pain)<sup>2</sup>.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Earlier, Tulsidas had lived in Ayodhya, the city of Lord Ram, and moved to Kashi sometime later. So he refers to this and says that of all the places he chose to come to Kashi or Varanasi as he had heard about the great glory of Lord Shiva, and also because he thought that since the scriptures say that Shiva bestows the boon of salvation to all those who die there it is far better for him to spend the last days of his life at Kashi. Again, since Lord Shiva had been praised by Tulsidas' own preferred deity, i.e. Lord Ram, the saint saw no harm in shifting base from Ayodhya to Kashi where he expected to get better spiritual solace. But he had not expected the hostility he would meet there from vested and corrupted interests—which led him to pen these verses.

<sup>2</sup>Tulsidas has prayed to Lord Shiva that the Lord must rise up to the occasion and honour his own good name and reputation. Allowing Tulsidas to suffer on two counts—one for being harassed by the so-called holy men of Kashi, and the other from his ailing body which pains due to illness—will not do any good to Lord Shiva's good name and reputation. On the contrary, they would give the Lord a very bad name and undermine his immaculate reputation as the redeemer and liberator.

Tulsidas stresses that his case is worthy of special attention for Shiva. This is because he is not one of the ordinary hundreds and thousands who come to Kashi to live and die there in search of liberation and deliverance. Shiva must remember that Tulsidas has a special status because he is not simply an ordinary devotee of Lord Ram, the 'Supreme Lord', but one who has a 'special relationship with the Lord'; he is the 'favourite devotee' so to say.

So, just like a king of a place makes special arrangements for a special guest who has come to him from some other king's place, it is expected of Lord Shiva to take special care of Tulsidas. But unfortunately, it is not that way.

Hence, Tulsidas kind of gives a polite hint to Shiva that the latter must wake up to his responsibilities and provide for Tulsidas' peace, or otherwise he would be compelled to approach his own Lord, Lord Sri Ram, the Supreme Being and the Lord of All, to get himself redressed. And in that case Shiva would not be eligible to grumble and harbour grudge against Tulsidas for not giving the former an opportunity to redress his grievances because Tulsidas is approaching him, Shiva, with this petition first before proceeding to Lord Ram.]

जीबेकी न लालसा, दयाल महादेव! मोहि,  
मालुम है तोहि, मरिबेईको रहतु हौं।  
कामरिपु! रामके गुलामनिको कामतरु!  
अवलंब जगदंब सहित चहतु हौं॥  
रोग भयो भूत-सो, कुसूत भयो तुलसीको,  
भूतनाथ, पाहि! पदपंकज गहतु हौं।  
ज्याइये तौ जानकीरमन-जन जानि जियँ  
मारिये तौ मागी मीचु सूधियै कहतु हौं॥167॥

167. jībēkī na lālasā, dayāla mahādēva! mōhi,  
māluma hai tōhi, maribē'ikō rahatu haum.  
kāmaripu! rāmakē gulāmanikō kāmataru!  
avalamba jagadamba sahita cahatu haum..  
rōga bhayō bhūta-sō, kusūta bhayō tulasīkō,  
bhūtanātha, pāhi! padapaṅkaja gahatu haum.  
jyā'iyē tau jānakīramana-jana jāni jiyam'  
māriyē tau māgī mīcu sūdhiyai kahatu haum..167..

Verse no. 7/167—'Oh merciful Mahadev (dayāla mahādēva)! I have no desire to stay alive. You know that I stay (in Kashi) to die.

[Tulsidas means that he has come to Kashi to die here in the hope that he will get liberation and deliverance as proclaimed by the scriptures. So in spite of all the sufferings being inflicted upon him, he is not going to run away.]

Oh the enemy of Kamdeo (kāmaripu)! You are like a Kalpa Tree (an all wish fulfilling tree of the gods) for the devotees of Lord Sri Ram. I want to have your and universal mother Parvati's protection and refuge<sup>1</sup>.

On the behest of ghosts, this disease is dogging me like a accursed spirit out on a vengeance due to which this humble Tulsidas is made to suffer immensely. So, oh Lord of Ghosts (bhūtanātha)! Please save me<sup>2</sup>.

I fall and hold your feet (to pray and plead with you). If you want to keep me alive then do it with a dose of kindness, treating me as a servant of Janki-Ballav (Lord Sri Ram). And, on the other hand, if you wish to kill me (or punish me for whatso

reason it may be), then I tell (request) you clearly to give me a death as desired by me.<sup>3</sup>

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Clearly here, after politely admonishing Lord Shiva of being careless about his welfare in the previous verses, especially verse nos. 165—166 herein above, Tulsidas seeks to assuage the Lord's feelings by saying that is the one who fulfils all the wishes of Lord Ram's devotees just like the all wish-fulfilling tree of gods. He wants to let it be known that whatever he has said earlier was not meant in any way to imply that Lord Shiva neglects him because he, Tulsidas, prefers Lord Ram over any other deity—because the fact is that Shiva goes out of his way to fulfil the wishes of the devotee of Lord Ram. In other words, Tulsidas now implores Shiva to take care of him as he is a devotee of Lord Ram, and Shiva is committed to fulfil the wishes of all such people!

<sup>2</sup>The implication is clear and obvious. Shiva is the 'Lord of ghosts and evil spirits', and so he is the right Authority to control these evil ones. In this creation, the supreme Creator had assigned specific jobs to all the gods and goddesses for the smooth functioning of his creation. Controlling ghosts, phantoms and evil spirits fell under the jurisdiction of Shiva. When one needs any work done in this world, one needs to approach the right concerned Authority. So the same thing applies here: Tulsidas says that he is pleading with Shiva because he is the Authority who controls ghosts and evil spirits who appear to be the ones who are tormenting him. And once again, this may be the reason why Tulsidas did not plead with Lord Ram instead—because even if he had done so, Lord Ram would have to 'pass on his complaint to the concerned Authority to be dealt with', and this means that Tulsidas' plea would finally land at the door of Shiva for proper action. So the wise saint thought to himself—'why not make a direct appeal?'

<sup>3</sup>If you, Lord Shiva, wish that I live a little longer so that I can sing your and Lord Ram's glories, then let me live in peace. Let this pain of mine go away, and let these evil spirits stop tormenting me. And I mean also my tormentors as referred to earlier in verse no. 165.

But in case you decide that my time is up and lifespan has come to an end, I still have no complaint because I know that everyone has to die one day, and besides it this is why I came to Kashi in the first place—i.e. to die here and get liberation and deliverance as promised by the scriptures which say that anyone who dies at Kashi is sure to get liberation because Lord Shiva has vowed this as his responsibility. Then in this case, what is the problem or hesitation as I am telling you myself that I want to die, and it is for this reason that I have come to Kashi?

The problem it seems is elsewhere. Please tell me why are you subjecting me to such a terrible pain in my arms and not letting me die peacefully and uphold your promise that you would provide liberation and deliverance to all those who die at Kashi? Instead of either of the two options that are reasonable and civil, why am I being made to suffer like a great criminal being subjected to torture by the king of the realm? Oh Lord, this is not good for your reputation and good name; it does not behove of a Lord like you who is famed to be merciful, compassionate, kind and gracious. So please heed me and remove my sufferings.]

भूतभव! भवत पिसाच-भूत-प्रेत-प्रिय,  
आपनो समाज सिव आपु नीकें जानिये।  
नाना बेष, बाहन, बिभूषन, बसन, बास,  
खान-पान, बलि-पूजा बिधिको बखानिये।।



रामके गुलामनिकी रीति, प्रीति सूधी सब,  
 सबसों सनेह, सबही को सनमानिये ।  
 तुलसीकी सुधरै सुधारे भूतनाथहीके  
 मेरे माय बाप गुरु संकर-भवानिये ॥168॥

168. bhūtabhava! bhavata pisāca-bhūta-prēta-priya,  
 āpanō samāja siva āpu nīkēm jāniyē.  
 nānā bēśa, bāhana, bibhūśana, basana, bāsa,  
 khāna-pāna, bali-pūjā bidhikō bakhāniyē..  
 rāmakē gulāmanikī rīti, prīti sūdhī saba,  
 sabasōm sanēha, sabahī kō sanamāniyē.  
 tulasīkī sudharai sudhārē bhūtanāthahīkē  
 mērē māya bāpa guru saṅkara-bhavāniyē..168..

Verse no. 7/168—'Oh Lord Bhava! You are the cause or the creator of the 'five fundamental elements' from which the rest of this creation was formed (bhūtabhava).

[These five elements are—sky, air, fire, water and earth. It is believed that the entire creation is moulded from these fundamental raw materials. This statement clearly elevates Lord Shiva to the stature of Brahm, the Supreme Being who has been described as the Creator of this creation in the Upanishads.]

Ghosts, phantoms and spirits are dear to you, and you know very well who forms your company. They are extremely odd, weird, bizarre and strange so much so that it is not possible for anyone within his senses to describe anything about their mannerism, habit and lifestyle. Everything about your company is outlandish and peculiar—be it their attire, their mounts, their ornaments, the places where they dwell, their eating habits and likings, the type of offerings and sacrifices that are accepted by them, and the system of worship that they practice.<sup>1</sup>

[Now, compare their habits and mannerisms with those of Lord Ram's devotees.] The devotees of Lord Ram are straight-forward in their behaviour and manners. They are naturally inclined to be lovable and comely, showing natural affection and friendship to all without distinction. They do not harbour prejudices and ill-will against anyone; they show respect to all and are courteous to them.

[The contrast between those who keep company with Lord Shiva and those who keep company with Lord Ram is sharp and clear here. Shiva's company consists of fearful ghosts and phantoms who everyone knows are better avoided by the length of a long barge pole even in one's bad dream. They are harbingers of evil omen, and make people flee for their lives should they ever come near them.

On the other hand, Lord Ram's devotees who surround their Lord are highly gentlemanly, polite and loving. Everyone likes them and their company, and they are welcome wherever they go.

When Tulsidas pondered over this matter and analysed the situation he came to the logical conclusion that this was the basic reason why he is being subjected to such pain and misery: The patron god of these ghosts and spirits, i.e. Lord Bhairav who happens to be that form of Lord Shiva who is the lord of these bizarre creatures, got jealous of him because he was becoming popular and sought after by the people because of his nice, civil manners and good, friendly outlook, as is the wont of all devotees of Lord Ram.

The sarcasm of the metaphor and the aphorism associated with it is so obvious here. Tulsidas is talking about his tormentors, the priests and pundits of Kashi who claim themselves to be devotees of Lord Shiva but behave as if they were evil spirits hell-bent to cause misery on docile and harmless common men who cause no harm to them or who do not even interfere in their evil ways. But still these evil people enjoy tormenting humble people for no rhyme or reason at all. Refer: verse no. 165 above.

But again, Tulsidas knows that Lord Shiva, in his holiest and divine form, is not that sort of Lord who will ever allow that the devotee of Lord Ram, or for that matter any humble person who has come to seek refuge with the Lord, should be subjected to the sufferings that Tulsidas had to undergo.. On the contrary, Shiva is a merciful and compassionate Lord God who has a charitable heart and lovable nature like no other God. In fact, this is the reason why Tulsidas has himself exhorted others to come and take refuge with Lord Shiva—refer: verse nos. 159-164.

Therefore, Tulsidas concludes, it is not the fault of Lord Shiva but of ‘Bhoot-Naath or Bhairav’ (bhūtanātha), the patron god of ghosts, phantoms and spirits that he and others like him are made to suffer in Kashi. Nevertheless, since Bhairav is one of the sub-forms of Shiva, the latter can’t absolve himself of responsibility to afford protection to Tulsidas as he knows well that he (Tulsidas) has done nothing wrong.]

Tulsidas says: ‘My fate shall be mended only when ‘Bhooth-Naath’ (bhūtanātha) wants so. As for me, Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati are not only like his loving and caring parents but are also like his Guru (the moral preceptor and teacher who is deemed to always show love and affection towards his ward, who in this case is Tulsidas).’

[Tulsidas has been very careful with words here. When he means ‘the lord of ghosts, phantoms and spirits’ he uses a word specific to this meaning—viz. ‘Bhūtanātha’, which means ‘Lord of ghosts’. And when he means ‘Lord Shiva who is compassionate and peace-giving like a father’, he categorically states it by using the word ‘Saṅkara’, the name which is more commonly called Shiva and which means ‘one who is calm, peaceful, truthful and beautiful’. Say, how can the Lord of ghosts who torment others be ever calm and peaceful? So the distinction is clear.

He means that he has no grudge against Lord Shiva or Mother Parvati for they are like loving parents and Guru for him. It is the ‘Bhooth-Naath’ who is causing him all the trouble. But since Bhooth-Naath is a junior to Lord Shiva, the latter must be informed about the nuisance the former is creating so that remedial steps can be taken. For otherwise, the chief Lord, Shiva, would get a bad name for misdeeds done by his juniors.

And we shall read in the next verse no. 169 that indeed Lord Shiva paid heed to Tulsidas’ pleadings. The Lord unleashed his wrath on the corrupt and unscrupulous people of Kashi by cursing them with the scourage of the plague which descended upon place with a vengefulness—as if to punish Tulsidas’ tormentors.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, (i) Doha no. 93 along with its preceding Chaupai line nos. 6-8, and (ii) Chanda line nos. 1-2 that describe Lord Shiva’s companions: the ghosts, phantoms and spirits.]

### Plague In Kāshi

गौरीनाथ, भोरानाथ, भवत भवानीनाथ !  
बिस्वनाथपुर फिरी आन कलिकालकी ।

संकर-से नर, गिरिजा-सी नारी कासीबासी,  
 बेद कही, सही ससिसेखर कृपालकी ।।  
 छमुख-गनेस तें महेसके पियारे लोग  
 बिकल बिलोकियत, नगरी बिहालकी ।  
 पुरी-सुरबेलि केलि काटत किरात कलि  
 निठुर निहारिये उघारि डीठि भालकी ।।169 ।।

169. gaurīnātha, bhōrānātha, bhavata bhavānīnātha!  
 bisvanāthapura phirī āna kalikālakī.  
 saṅkara-sē nara, girijā-sī nārīm kāsībāsī,  
 bēda kahī, sahī sasisēkhara kṛpālakī..  
 chamukha-ganēsa tēm mahēsakē piyārē lōga  
 bikala bilōkiyata, nagarī bihālakī.  
 purī-surabēli kēli kātata kirāta kali  
 niṭhura nihāriyē ughāri ḍīṭhi bhālakī..169..

Verse no. 7/169—[Once, there was a plague at Kashi. This resulted in a lot of suffering for the people. In this verse, Tulsidas shows how soft his heart was. It were the same people who had been tormenting him till now. So, he could have expressed his sense of satisfaction that his prayers to Lord Shiva to punish his tormentors have been heard by the Lord and that is why the people are made to suffer due to the plague. But it is not in Tulsidas' nature to enjoy at the suffering of others. So when he saw the mayhem and misery caused by this scourge, he raised his hands and pleaded with Lord Shiva to end their sufferings.

Cleverly, Tulsidas uses this opportunity to request Lord Shiva to go to the root of the problem to eliminate it altogether. And what is it? It is 'Kali-Yug', the present era that is dominated by inherent corruption, sinfulness, evil, vices and moral turpitude. So, even if Shiva calms the suffering of the people and makes them realise that their sufferings were the result of their own misdeeds and sins, and they promise not to repeat them, it would be short-lived because the people would sooner or later revert back to their old bad habits under the influence of Kali-Yug. It would be like cutting the diseased branch of a tree while leaving the root of the disease, the infecting germs, parasitic insects and termites and other such factors intact. The disease would resurface once again, and by and by destroy the whole tree.

All the verses that follow, viz. from verse no. 169—to 177 have the same theme—suffering of the people under the onslaught of Kaliyug, and Tulsidas' prayer to the Lord to redeem them.

The reason why the plague spread in Kashi in the first place, though this pilgrim city is deemed to be holy and the abode of Lord Shiva himself, is explained by Tulsidas himself in verse no. 183 herein below.

Why is Tulsidas so concerned and worried about their suffering? Why is Lord Shiva allowing it to happen in his own realm at Kashi, and why has the Lord become indifferent? A note appended to verse no. 175 herein below explains it in detail.]

[Upon observing the horrible affects and sufferings caused by the plague at Kashi, Tulsidas prays to Lord Shiva—] 'Oh Lord of Gauri! Oh the simple-hearted One! Oh

husband of Bhavani! ['Gauri' and 'Bhavani' are other names of Parvati, the divine consort of Shiva.]

In this city of the 'Lord of the Universe' (bisvanāthapura), (i.e. Kashi or Varanasi), the curse of Kaliyug has spread its tentacles. The men and women who live in Kashi are like Shiva and Parvati respectively in a personified form—this is said by the Vedas and it is endorsed (bears the signature) of 'Chandrshekhar' (literally, the bearer of the moon on the forehead; i.e. Lord Shiva himself).

[In earlier verses Tulsidas has lamented at the behaviour of the people of Kashi and equalled them with ghosts and phantoms. Now he soothes their ruffled feelings by saying that all are not like that—only those who are of evil nature are like the ghosts and spirits who torment others needlessly, but the rest are as affectionate and welcoming as if they were personified form of Shiva and Parvati.]

But today, (due to Kali's evil eye and curse) those who are dearer to Lord Mahesh (Shiva) than his own sons Shadanan and Ganesh are visibly very agitated and in great suffering. The whole city (of Kashi) is terribly upset.

Oh Lord! This cruel and merciless wood-cutter (i.e. Kali-Yug) is cutting your perennial creeper-like city as if it was a game for a hunter. [That is, the people of Kashi, whom you love so exceedingly, are being subjected to uncountable horrors by the evil effects of Kali-Yug.]

Look at him (the Kali-Yug) by opening your 3rd eye on your forehead (and burn him to ashes like you had destroyed Kaamdeo who had gone to disturb your peace when you were meditating).

[Note :- Tulsidas is requesting Lord Shiva to burn the sins of the people of Kashi which has revealed itself in the form of the plague. He asks Lord Shiva to spare the tree and destroy the infecting germ. It is more important to eliminate the tendency of the people to follow the dictates of Kali-Yug and continue to remain sinful than to merely subject them to punishment for their evil deeds that they have already done. Let them mend their future. So, Oh Lord, weed out sin and vices from your holy city for good!]

ठाकुर महेस, ठकुराइनि उमा-सी जहाँ,  
लोक-बेदहूँ बिदित महिमा ठहरकी ।  
भट रुद्रगन, पूत गनपति-सेनापति,  
कलिकालकी कुचाल काहू तौ न हरकी ॥  
बीसी बिस्वनाथकी बिषाद बड़ो बारानसी,  
बूझिए न ऐसी गति संकर-सहरकी ।  
कैसे कहै तुलसी बृषासुरके बरदानि  
बानि जानि सुधा तजि पीवनि जहर की ॥170॥

170. ṭhākura mahēsa, ṭhakurā'ini umā-sī jahām,  
lōka-bēdahūṁ bidita mahimā ṭhaharakī.  
bhaṭa rudragana, pūta ganapati-sēnāpati,  
kalikālakī kucāla kāhū tau na harakī..  
bīsīṁ bisvanāthakī biśāda baṛō bārānasīṁ,  
būjhi'ē na aisī gati saṅkara-saharakī.  
kaisē kahai tulasī br̥ṣāsarakē baradāni

bāni jāni sudhā taji pīvani jahara kī..170..

Verse no. 7/170—[In this verse, Tulsidas laments that the negative influences of Kali-Yug are so strong and powerful that it is well-nigh impossible to resist them and overcome their nuisance. Kali-Yug just bulldozes its way through, not even sparing the so-called holy pilgrim sites where it is supposed to have no or at least negligible effect.

The best example of this fearless, bludgeoning attitude of Kali-Yug which undermines all righteousness and propriety, creating in-surmountable barriers for those who wish to attain spiritual peace and deliverance of their souls, creating fear in their heart and mind, is the pilgrim city of Kashi.

Kali-Yug does not even fear the fact that the patron deity of this place is the mighty Lord Shiva, the Lord whose wrath had burnt Kamdeo to ashes. Kali-Yug does not desist from creating mischief here also—so fearless and arrogant and haughty it has become. Tulsidas wonders that if this is the situation at Kashi which ought to have been free from Kali-Yug's evil designs by the virtue of its patron protector being Lord Shiva himself—the Lord who does not tolerate nonsense and is very harsh in his punishment, one can very well imagine the condition that may be prevailing at other places that do not have such a powerful and almighty Lord as their patron protector.]

[Talking about Kashi, Tulsidas says—] Where Lord Mahesh (i.e. Lord Shiva) is the master or lord of the realm, and Parvati (Shiva's divine consort) is the mistress or lady, and the fame of which place is even asserted by the Vedas (primary scriptures) and recognised by all the Lokas (all the corners of the world); where the subordinates of 'Rudra' (which is the 11<sup>th</sup> form of Shiva which is the Lord's angry and ruthless form) are the warriors (soldiers; troopers; attendants; handsmen; chamberlains; messengers), and 'Lord Shadanan' and 'Lord Ganesh' (the two sons of Shiva and Parvati) the commanders of these warriors—its such a marvellous wonder that even in such a holy and protected place, no one could stop the evil designs of Kaliyug and the havoc caused by it.

In this city of the 'Lord of the Universe' (*bisvanātha*), called Varanasi (*bārānasī*), great sorrow has spread everywhere so much that one should not ask about the horrible condition that prevails in this city of Lord Shankar (Shiva) (*saṅkara-sahara*).

[Tulsidas laments and says poignantly that it is such an irony that the bad influences of Kaliyug have not spared even Kashi though this pilgrim place is supposed to be protected by Lord Shiva who is not an ordinary Lord but the one who is the 'Lord of the Universe'. Normally one expects that if a place has such a senior God as Lord Shiva as its patron deity and protector, then this place should be safe from all evil and sinful tendencies that are prevalent at other places. But it is so sad that it is not so. This shows how powerful and invincible Kaliyug is, and how difficult it is to overcome its temptations and sufferings.]

Tulsidas says that he is aware of Lord Shiva's unconventional behaviour and nature as is evident from the fact that the Lord blessed the demon called Bhasmaasur with a boon, and preferred to drink (the Halaalal) poison instead of Amrit (nectar or ambrosia of life) that emerged at the time of the ancient churning of the ocean. In this situation, Tulsidas says he has no comments to make (regarding Shiva and why he is allowing Kaliyug to have its rough-shod ways at Kashi).'

[Note—Tulsidas means that Lord Shiva has a crazy, anomalous, unpredictable and incredulously abnormal nature. The Lord had not thought about the dangers of giving a boon to the cunning demon Bhasmaasur that if the latter placed his hand on someone's head that person would be immediately burnt to ashes. Once the demon got the boon, he decided to test its effectiveness on Shiva himself! He rushed to catch hold of Shiva and put his hand on the Lord's head. Terrified, Shiva ran helter skelter, and finally Lord Vishnu intervened with a trick that saved Shiva's life. Vishnu disguised himself as a beautiful damsel and started dancing before the demon Bhasmaasur who was enchanted by her beauty, giving Shiva a chance to escape and hide. Then while dancing Vishnu placed his hand on his own head as a dance move, and as soon as the demon mimicked it, he was burnt.

Another craziness in Shiva's nature was observed when the Lord drank the horrible poison instead of the ambrosia over which each god and demon was fighting to drink. Is it not odd and crazy for someone to prefer to drink poison instead of ambrosia?

This being the unconventional and crazy nature of Shiva, Tulsidas says there is no wonder in the Lord allowing Kaliyug having its way in the Lord's city of Kashi. Just like the demon Bhasmaasur being granted permission to burn anyone by putting his accursed hands on the doomed person, and then repenting for granting such a crazy boon without a second thought, Shiva has done the same with Kaliyug by allowing it to enter the Lord's city and taking up residence here. The Lord is so merciful and broad-hearted that perhaps he thought that if all are welcome at Kashi, if the most sinful come here and get the Lord's protection, why should he not allow Kaliyug to come and stay at Kashi. But the Lord did not realise that Kaliyug will become another Bhasmaasur, creating havoc in the place of his own landlord and benefactor—and creating a horrible situation which would compel the Lord to run away from the onslaught of evil, sin and wrong-doings that would overwhelm the city deemed to be Lord Shiva's city. It's almost like the case of a king first allowing an enemy's spies enter his kingdom in good faith and good promises, and then the same people pull the rug from under the king's throne and lead to his downfall!

Tulsidas says—well, how can one help. If Shiva prefers to drink poison over ambrosia, if he prefers Kaliyug's evil character over noble and righteous character, what can anyone say? Since some of Lord Shiva's actions are crazy and highly odd, it's no wonder that he has harboured Kaliyug. It is not that Shiva is unable to resist Kaliyug or powerless against it, but it is the Lord's nature to oblige all and sundry, even the most sinful and bad, that he has unwittingly allowed Kaliyug to enter and abide in his protected city of Kashi.]

लोक-बेदहूँ बिदित बाराणसीकी बड़ाई  
 बासी नर नारि ईस-अंबिका-सरूप हैं ।  
 कालनाथ कोतवाल, दंडकारि दंडपानि,  
 सभासद गनप-से अमित अनूप हैं ॥  
 तहाँऊँ कुचालि कलिकालकी कुरीति, कैधौं  
 जानत न मूढ़ इहाँ भूतनाथ भूप हैं ।  
 फलैं फूलैं फैलैं खल, सीदैँ साधु पल-पल  
 खाती दीपमालिका, ठठाइयत सूप हैं ॥171॥

171. lōka-bēdahūṁ' bidita bārānasīkī barā'ī  
 bāsī nara nāri īsa-ambikā-sarūpa hairṁ.  
 kālanātha kōtavāla, daṇḍakāri daṇḍapāni,

sabhāsada ganapa-sē amita anūpa hairṁ..  
 tahāmūṁ<sup>ṁ</sup> kucālī kalikālakī kurīti, kaidhaum  
 jānata na mūrha ihām<sup>ṁ</sup> bhūtanātha bhūpa hairṁ..  
 phalairṁ phūlairṁ phalairṁ khala, sīdairṁ sādhu pala-pala  
 khātī dīpamālikā, ṭhaṭhā'iyata sūpa hairṁ..171..

Verse no. 7/171—The immensity of glory of Kashi is legendary and fabled, and it is well established in the world as well as in the Vedas.

[Refer also to verse no. 170, line no. 1 herein above. Kashi, being the terrestrial abode of Lord Shiva, has astounding spiritual importance and significance. Its spiritual value is recognised throughout the world, and it is also endorsed by the scriptures, the Vedas. Rarely has any other place honoured as much as Kashi because Lord Shiva chose it to be his abode. It is not an ordinary pilgrim place for it is additionally glorified and exceptionally empowered by the simple virtue of having the 'Lord of the Universe', Lord Shiva, as its sovereign deity and protector patron. No other pilgrim place has this privilege, and nowhere else liberation and deliverance is as easily available as Kashi—because here Lord Shiva himself roams around uttering the holy name of Lord Ram, the Supreme Being himself, in the ears of the dying person, thereby ensuring his or her instant salvation, a feat not possible anywhere else. Even Tulsidas has exhorted others, who go to other places for fulfilment of their spiritual needs, to be wise and practical and come to Kashi instead—refer: verse no. 162.]

The residents of this place (the males and the females) are like a personified form of Lord Shiva and his divine consort Parvati.

[Refer also to verse no. 169, line no. 3 herein above. It means that the people of Kashi are as respectable and honourable as Lord Shiva and goddess Parvati themselves.]

[Describing the different powerful and able custodians of law in Kashi, Tulsidas says—] The police chief (superintendent or chief warden) of this place is Kaal-Bhairav himself; the judge/magistrate is Dandapani-Bhairav, and there are many qualified and matchless councillors and ministers such as Ganesh. But the miscreant Kaliyug did not refrain from trying his dirty tricks even here.

[The 'Kaal Bhairav' is the form of Lord Shiva who controls death, and he is senior to the 'Dandapani Bhairav' who is a personified form of Yama, the god who holds a baton in his hands, rides a wild he-buffalo, is fierce by countenance to the extreme, and is responsible for punishing evil and sinful people and dragging them to hell at the time of their death if they hadn't mended their by this time. Meanwhile, Lord Ganesh is Lord Shiva's son who is believed to be the head or chief of all of Shiva's attendants and subordinates, such as the Kaal Bhairav and the Dandapani Bhairav mentioned here. Ganesh is a wise deity, and therefore he acts as a magistrate or chief warden of the law-keepers of the city of Lord Shiva. The three most able and powerful aides of Lord Shiva are responsible for maintaining law and order in the abode of the Lord. But in spite of them, Kaliyug manages to play around with his dirty tricks and create all types of mischief. Tulsidas therefore wonders about the powers and potentials of Kaliyug and bemoans that even so powerful law-keepers as Kaal Bhairav, Dandapani Bhairav and Lord Ganesh aren't able to control Kaliyug and stop the latter from his nefarious activities.]

Alternatively, perhaps, that fool of a Kaliyug did not know that ‘Bhootnath’, the Lord of Ghosts (i.e. Lord Shiva) himself, is the King (Lord) of this place.

[As stated above, Tulsidas is dumbfounded that inspite of such effective and powerful guardians of the city of Lord Shiva as Ganesh, Kaal Bhairav and Dandapani Bhairav, Kaliyug has so fearlessly spread its tentacles of corruption and vices at Kashi. There must be surely something more than what meets the eye. Perhaps, it may be conjectured that these three law-keepers of Kashi thought that Kaliyug has the permission and consent of their own Lord, Shiva, to be present here. Otherwise, it is not possible for it to stay here directly under their very nose, and even under the watch of their Lord Shiva, and fearlessly do the mischief it is doing. Obviously it seems Kaliyug has some kind of boon or grant of immunity from Lord Shiva just like the demon Bhasmaasur had as cited in verse no. 170, which has enabled Kaliyug to become so bold and fearless and haughty inspite of the overbearing presence of the three custodians of law and order—Lord Kaal Bhairav who instils the fear of death in the heart of the sinful, the baton-wielding and terrible-looking Lord Dandapani who would beat the offender to pulp with his baton, and Ganesh who never allows ruffians, criminals and law-breakers go free from his stern judgement. So, when the three guardians of law saw that Kaliyug shows no sign of fear and restraint, they deduced that he has some subtle or secret backing of Lord Shiva, and it being the case they thought it good to keep quiet and their hands off Kaliyug because Lord Shiva is their Lord and the King of the place.

Tulsidas knows that this is not the reality. Actually, Kaliyug is exploiting the gracious and all-forgiving nature of the majestic Lord Shiva who gives a long rope to the sinful and the offender—till the time the latter exceeds all limits when the Lord’s wrath turns the miscreant to ashes, as had happened with Kamdeo.]

[But in the meanwhile, what is the result of allowing Kaliyug to have a free run of the place? Tulsidas pensively moans and gives a briefing—] Miscreants and scoundrels have prospered, whereas saints and pious people have to suffer every moment.

[Everything seems to be going in the wrong direction. Whereas good and righteous people suffer when they ought to have been happy and joyful, the nasty and the evil enjoy all the pleasures and niceties of life instead of being made accountable for their sins and punished. Everything seems odd and bizarre.]

There is a saying in Hindi that the Ghee (clarified butter) was eaten (consumed) by the ‘chain of lamps’ (*dīpamālikā*), but the next day, it is the cook (*ṭhaṭhā’iyata sūpa*) that is beaten (because he is accused of stealing the butter).’

[When earthen lamps are lighted with clarified butter, the Ghee, as its fuel or oil, it is obvious that the wick’s flame would consume all the Ghee that is used in the lamps. Nothing would remain the next morning. Now, it cannot be judged how much Ghee was actually consumed to light and keep the lamps lighted. The amount of Ghee used depends upon a number of factors—such as the number of earthen lamps lit, the depth of the cavity of each lamp that holds the Ghee, the length of time the lamps burnt, and so on. But if the housemaster is a miserly man he would accuse the cook of having stolen the Ghee which is also used in cooking food for the festivities and ceremonies that accompany the lighting of the Ghee-lamps on festivals and special occasions. And then the cook is bastinadoed for no fault of his.

What Tulsidas means by citing this adage in the present context is this: The people are judged and punished for their misdeeds and sinful lives while they are



alive, as when the plague descended upon Kashi as narrated in verse no. 169, and also at the time of death by condemning the offender to hell by the gods above mentioned without them realising that it is not the fault of the individual but that of Kaliyug who has spread his evil influence over the society like a dark smoke covering the land and blinding the people's vision. Kaliyug has corrupted the man's wisdom and morality, and has made him fall prey to worldly passions, temptations and lust of greed. So, just like the innocent cook being beaten black and blue on the accusation of stealing the clarified butter whereas the actual culprit is the lamp which burnt it for fuel, and it was done on the orders of the housemaster, to punish the innocent people for the misdeeds of Kaliyug is a clear instance of miscarriage of justice.]

[Note—Speaking in a general way by employing the allusion of Kashi, Tulsidas poignantly says that in the present times those who are corrupt and unscrupulous thrive and prosper, whereas those who are upright, honest and righteous suffer a lot. This applies to all spheres of life and in all the places. It obviously seems that the different gods who are supposed to maintain morality and good conduct in the society have become helpless under the ascending powers of Kaliyug.

It ought to be noted here that 'Kaliyug' is a metaphoric term, a sort of aphorism used to refer all morally degrading and evil influences that ails the society today, characters that are negative in nature and lead to the fall of the man. In earlier ages and times gone by the things weren't so bad, but as the world developed and newer methods for pleasure and comfort were found, temptations and materialism increased. People stooped low to the bottom of the trough to scoop up whatever spoils were available, and since the resources were limited and the scoop was not infinite, there started a scuffle, a fierce one, as these resources began to dry up. People were ready to cut each other's throat to lay their hands on the exploits, and this led to dumping of morality and ethics. All this degradation and moral turpitude are the handiwork of Kaliyug which incites worldly temptations, lust and greed of an insatiable nature, and this in turn decimates spirituality and all the principles of Dharma (righteousness, probity, propriety, morality, good conduct and ethics).

When this state of affairs would reach its climax, Lord Shiva would step in as 'Rudra the Concluder'—the third of the Trinity Gods who is assigned the job of concluding this present creation so that the supreme Creator can restart with a fresh slate the process of initiating the next phase of life—creation, sustenance and conclusion.]

पंचकोस पुन्यकोस स्वार्थ-परमार्थको  
जानि आपु आपने सुपास बास दियो है।  
नीच नर-नारी न सँभारि सके आदर,  
लहत फल कादर बिचारि जो न कियो है॥  
बारी बारानसी बिनु कहे चक्रपानि चक्र,  
मानि हितहानि सो मुरारि मन भियो है।  
रोसमें भरोसो एक आसुतोस कहि जात  
बिकल बिलोकि लोक कालकूट पियो है॥172॥

172. pañcakōsa pun'yakōsa svāratha-paramārathakō  
jāni āpu āpanē supāsa bāsa diyō hai.  
nīca nara-nāri na sam̐bhāri sakē ādara,  
lahata phala kādara bicāri jō na kiyo hai..

bārī bārānasī binu kahē cakrapāni cakra,  
 māni hitahāni sō murāri mana bhiyō hai.  
 rōsamēm bharōsō ēka āsutōsa kahi jāta  
 bikala bilōki lōka kālakūṭa piyō hai..172..

Verse no. 7/172—Situated in an area of 5-kosa (approximately 10 miles), the city of Kashi is a symbolic treasury or source of all auspiciousness and good fortunes (pun'yakōsa), and it is also a means by which one can achieve all his desired fruits of self-interest—i.e. rewards in the form of fulfilment of worldly desires, as well as rewards in the form of spiritual liberation, deliverance and salvation.<sup>1</sup>

Realising this unique quality of this city, Lord Shiva was kind and charitable enough to allow the people to come and live here by his side (i.e. under his dominion and protection). But it so happened that the evil souls, those who were born scoundrels and were deceitful by nature, hid in the midst of the milling crowd of good

[Lord Shiva thought that the poor souls who are tormented by Kaliyug elsewhere would come at Kashi and live here in peace under his protection. The beneficent and benevolent Lord who has a simple heart had graciously extended this benefit or privilege to the people in good faith, without realising how unscrupulous, ungrateful and unfaithful some of the people are. So what happened? This question is answered now below—]

But some amongst these people were wretched rascals, men and women, (who were not mentally fit to be elevated to this status of being companions of Lord Shiva and worthy of the Lord's grace). They could not understand the importance of the rare privilege that was extended to them, or they could not cope with this honour shown to them (so much so that they become arrogant, and the arrogance went into their head). As a result, they started behaving thoughtlessly, committing sins and all the wayward deeds that are hallmarks of Kaliyug. It is as a consequence of their own folly and evil deeds that they suffer miserably even while living in Kashi (and then they blame Lord Shiva for their sufferings).

[Tulsidas clearly means that out of the population living at Kashi, a few people are bad, and then they suffer for their misdeeds when they accuse Lord Shiva for their sufferings and for not protecting them.]

When Lord Murari's (Krishna's) divine discus (the Sudarshan Chakra) had burnt Kashi, after having cut-off the head of the deceitful Paundrak, without the permission of Lord Murari (Krishna, the slayer of demon 'Mur'), the Lord had felt shameful, guilty and sorrowful that he has caused an unwarranted and unintended offense to Lord Shiva by letting his weapon, the Sudarshan Chakra, burn Kashi, Shiva's abode<sup>1</sup>.

If this is the case (that even Lord Krishna, who was an incarnation of the almighty Lord Vishnu, would feel sorry that the action of his Chakra could be misinterpreted as an insult or affront to Shiva, which of course was not at all intended), then what standing has Kaliyug before your might and powers?

[In other words, Tulsidas says that if Lord Krishna feared in doing something that would offend Lord Shiva, why is this fellow Kaliyug doing all the mischief? Is it not afraid of Lord Shiva's wrath? The answer is: Shiva lent a lot of space and spared a lot of forgiveness for Kaliyug who is represented by the evil people who lived in Kashi. But when things went out of control, Lord Shiva was wrathful that his

magnanimity and kindness was misused by Kaliyug. So, to punish Kaliyug, Lord Shiva sent the plague as described in verse no. 169 above.]

[This being the background, Tulsidas now continues—] ‘But when you (Lord Shiva) became wrathful (at the prevalence of sins and vices at Kashi), you unleashed your anger (in the form of the plague). This causes immense sufferings to all the people—even the innocent are being subjected to horrors.

So, oh gracious Lord who is so kind and caring that you had even drunk the horribly scorching poison called ‘Kaalkoot’ (which was produced at the time of the churning of the ocean by the gods and demons in search for nectar) just in order to save the world from getting scalded alive—why are you not showing the same degree of compassion and mercy on Kashi which is being burnt alive (i.e. scouraged by the plague) under the wrath of your anger?

Oh Lord! You must be mindful of your reputation as being ‘Lord Ashutosh’ (āsutōsa). Indeed, when the world is being tormented by opposed gods and stars, the only one to provide solace and succour is you, Lord Shiva.

[The word Ashutosh implies that Lord Shiva fulfils all desires to the satisfaction of the seeker. With this reputation in mind, Tulsidas prays to Lord Shiva to seek redemption from the suffering of the plague.

Tulsidas pleads that though the Lord has sent pestilence, the plague, as a punishment for those who have not only defiled the holiness of the Lord’s abode, the city of Kashi, and have given it a bad name, but have also dragged the Lord’s reputation to doubt by forcing people to question Lord Shiva’s powers and ability as the all-powerful Lord of the World because it apparently looks that the Lord has become helpless against the unslaught of Kaliyug—but even then, prays Tulsidas, Lord Shiva must realise that those who are law abiding and righteous are also suffering. This is also not good for the fame of Lord Shiva who is renowned as the merciful and all-forgiving Lord.

So, Lord Shiva should withdraw the plague and restore calm on the city.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The glory of Kashi has also been extolled in verse nos. 181-182 herein below.

<sup>2</sup>The ‘Burning of Kashi by the Sudarshan Chakra’: This story is narrated in *Srimad Bhagwat Mahapuran*, 10/66. It is briefly as follows—

The haughty king of a place called Karush was known by the name of Paundrak. Overtaken by arrogance and ignorance, he declared himself as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu and challenged Lord Krishna for a duel. He sent a message to Krishna that he is the real ‘Vasudeo’, and therefore Krishna should stop calling himself by this name and discard the signs or marks that he wears as Lord Vishnu’s incarnation (which Krishna had on the sole of his feet and palms of his hand). Paundrak even asked Lord Krishna to surrender before him.

Lord Krishna decided to crush his haughtiness, and so accepted the challenge for a duel. So the Lord came to Kashi with a small detachment of troops, while Paundrak assembled a huge army of hundreds and thousands, and was also joined by the king of Kashi who was under his dominion. As the battle commenced, Krishna’s vicious discus, the ‘Sudarshan Chakra’, annihilated the entire army and killed Paundrak. The Chakra cut-off the head of the king of Kashi and flung it to the city. When the sons of the king of Kashi saw the severed head of their father, they grieved intensely and vowed to revenge his death. Since Lord Shiva was their patron deity, they prayed to

the latter to give them the boon and the power so that they can kill the slayer of their father.

Lord Shiva advised them that they should propitiate goddess Krityaa who is the deity that spills the blood of her devotee's enemy in the battle-field. Once pleased, Krityaa revealed herself as a leaping tongue of ferocious fire, and rushed towards the Chakra and Krishna to burn them. But she was no match against the blazing heat emanating from the red-hot Chakra that shone like a sun with all its splendorous might. Seeing Krityaa approach with a howling sound, the Chakra rushed at her, and made her turn back and flee in terror. Say, how can any fire burn the sun?

Chakra was exceedingly angry, and it pursued Krityaa relentlessly. Krityaa fled to Kashi because it was here that the sons of the dead king had prayed to the Goddess on the advice of Shiva. The result was that Kashi was burnt to ashes.

One of the other reasons why Chakra decided to burn Kashi was that Krityaa had manifested herself as a raging fire at Dwarka, the capital of Lord Krishna, too. So, Chakra decided to give a tit-for-tat and burn Kashi.

Now, when Lord Krishna came to know that Kashi, the abode of Lord Shiva, was thus burnt without his consent, he felt very sorry—because he knew that Lord Shiva was not at all at fault, and he had not ordered Krityaa to go and burn either Dwarka or Krishna's Chakra. It were the sons of the dead king of Kashi who had instigated the goddess. So, Lord Krishna felt for Lord Shiva, and grieved that Shiva was unduly and unnecessarily subjected to insult and pain for no fault of his.

It must be noted here that Lord Krishna was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu just like Lord Ram was, and it is well documented that Lord Shiva is a most faithful and an ardent devotee of Lord Ram. This implies that Shiva is also indirectly devoted to Lord Krishna. Therefore, it is natural for Krishna to feel sorry at having his Chakra burn Lord Shiva's place Kashi and cause suffering to its people.]

### Prayer to Pārvati

(Divine Mother & consort of Lord Shivā)

रचत बिरंचि, हरि पालत, हरत हर  
तेरे हीं प्रसाद अग-जग-पालिके ।  
तोहिमें बिकास बिस्व, तोहिमें बिलास सब,  
तोहिमें समात, मातु भूमिधरबालिके ।।  
दीजै अवलंब जगदंब! न बिलंब कीजै,  
करुनातरंगिनी कृपा-तरंग-मालिके ।  
रोष महामारी, परितोष महतारी दुनी  
देखिये दुखारी, मुनि-मानस-मरालिके ।। 173 ।।

173. racata biran̄ci, hari pālata, harata hara  
tērē hīm prasāda aga-jaga-pālikē.  
tōhimēm bikāsa bisva, tōhimēm bilāsa saba,  
tōhimēm samāta, mātu bhūmidharabālikē..  
dījai avalamba jagadamba! na bilamba kijai,  
karunātaraṅginī krpā-taraṅga-mālikē.  
rōśa mahāmārī, paritōśa mahatārī duni

dēkhiyē dukhārī, muni-mānasa-marālikē..173..

Verse no. 7/173—[In verse nos. 173 and 174 Tulsidas prays to Goddess Parvati to do something so that the plague in Kashi abates.]

‘Oh Mother Goddess Parvati! It is by your divine blessings and kind empowerment that the creator Brahma creates this world, the sustainer Vishnu takes care of and protects this world, and the concluder Shiva brings an end to it.

The entire universe emerges from you (i.e. it is conceived by you), is established in you (i.e. it is nourished and provided for by you), and it finally merges back and collapses in you (at the time of its conclusion).

Oh Goddess, the Mother of the World! You are a river of mercy that is adorned by the current of kindness, benevolence and munificence. Please give me refuge without delay.

Oh Goddess; you are like the she-swan that floats majestically in the lake of a sage’s pious and devoted heart and mind (muni-mānasa-marālikē). When you become angry, your wrath takes the form of pestilence/plague (that is currently sweeping through Kashi), and when you are pleased and calm, you become a ‘mother-goddess’ personified for the world. Hence, look at us (the residents of Kashi who are suffering by the havoc created by the plague that has scouraged the city) with your benevolent, kind and merciful glance.’

[Note—After having prayed to Lord Shiva to calm down the plague and show mercy on the people of Kashi who are suffering horribly due to the pestilence, Tulsidas now prays to Mother Goddess Parvati. A mother is usually more soft-hearted and kind towards her off-springs than the father, and is more likely to forgive their misdemeanours and mischief than their father.

Lord Shiva is the Father of creation, and naturally therefore he is also the universal Father of the residents of Kashi. He is more angry at the mischief and sinful ways of the residents of Kashi than of other places because Kashi is the abode of Lord Shiva himself. He is its sovereign Lord, and its residents are his subjects. How can a king tolerate that his own subjects become overtly pervert and disobedient, not even fearing the king and defying his edicts with impunity by doing all things nonsense right under his nose, as well as that of his chief commanders and ministers (who in this case are Ganesh, Kaal-Bhairav and Dandapani-Bhairav—refer: verse no. 171)?

So what happened? When the threshold of tolerance was breached, even the most kind and forgiving Lord Shiva could not contain his anger—and unleashed his wrath by the way of the plague that ravaged Kashi during the times of Tulsidas to which he has already referred to in verse nos. 169-170.

Being a saintly person, Tulsidas could feel the pain and the suffering of the people; he empathised with them. He is all the more pained because he thought that Lord Shiva has cast this curse on the bad people of Kashi as they had been tormenting Tulsidas for quite some time regarding which he had already complained to Shiva—refer: verse no. 165.

Hence, Tulsidas now makes an earnest plea to the Mother Goddess Parvati to remove this curse of plague from Kashi. He chose Parvati because—(i) firstly, being a ‘mother’ she would be more kind and compassionate and inclined to remove the suffering of the people of Kashi due to the plague; (ii) secondly, she is the consort of Lord Shiva and therefore the Queen Mother of the realm known as Kashi, and so surely would be more effective in prevailing upon the Lord to calm down his anger and withdraw the plague, and (iii) thirdly, she is the ‘Mother Goddess’ representing

the cosmic 'Shakti' (powers, dynamism and energy) of the Supreme Being which enables the latter to create, sustain and conclude this creation as explicitly stated in this verse. If Parvati wishes to stop the plague, Shiva would be obliged to concede to her requests more than from anyone else.]

निपट बसेरे अघ औगुन घनेरे, नर-  
 नारिऊ अनेरे जगदंब! चेरी-चेरे हैं।  
 दारिद-दुखारी देबि भूसुर भिखारी-भीरु  
 लोभ मोह काम कोह कलिमल घेरे हैं।।  
 लोकरीतिराखी राम, साखी बामदेव जानि  
 जनकी बिनति मानि मातु! कहि मेरे हैं।  
 महामारी महेसानि! महिमाकी खानि, मोद-  
 मंगलकी रासि, दास कासीबासी तेरे हैं।।174।।

174. nipaṭa basērē agha auguna ghanērē, nara-  
 nārī'ū anērē jagadamba! cērī-cērē haiṁ.  
 dārida-dukhārī dēbi bhūsura bhikhārī-bhīru  
 lōbha mōha kāma kōha kalimala ghērē haiṁ..  
 lōkarītirākhī rāma, sākhī bāmadēva jāni  
 janakī binati māni mātu! kahi mērē haiṁ.  
 mahāmārī mahēsāni! mahimākī khāni, mōda-  
 maṅgalakī rāsi, dāsa kāsibāsī tērē haiṁ..174..

Verse no. 7/174—[Continuing to plead with Parvati on behalf of the suffering people of Kashi, Tulsidas prays—]

‘Oh Mother of the World (jagadamba)! The unjust and cruel residents of this place (Kashi), though they are an abode of sins and vices, are still your servants and children.

Oh Goddess! They are very unhappy due to poverty. The Brahmins have become greedy beggars and cowardly. This is why Kaliyug has successfully surrounded (ensnared) them with the vices of greed, attachments, lust and anger.

[Now in this verse Tulsidas shows his wisdom and high level of practical understanding of things. He had observed that the people had become so greedy for money that they did everything possible, including lying, cheating and deceit, to feed their stomachs. That is why they fleeced visitors and pilgrims with all sorts of conceit and pretensions. The things had gone so far that they had turned every nook and corner of the city as a niche for some or the other god or goddess so that unwary people would make donations in case and kind there. Even the learned class, the Brahmins, were so poor that their primary objective was to earn a livelihood rather than act as guides, teachers and preceptors, the role for them as had been envisioned in the scriptures. So even when corruption and lies were rampant, they just looked the other way. Tulsidas says the root of this moral degradation and turpitude is poverty and famishness.]

See Mother, even Lord Ram had not paid too much of an attention to the goodness or vices of his subjects as he ruled over them with equanimity and tolerance even as he took care not to violate established traditions—and Shiva is a witness to it.

[Not everyone in the kingdom of Lord Ram, i.e. in Ayodhya, was exemplarily upright and righteous, and nor was everyone sinful and unrighteous. In any kingdom both types of people live. After all, this is the unique feature of this creation—it has a

mix of the good and the bad. Had everything been fine and sunny, and had all his subjects been happy and immaculate of character, why would Lord Ram be forced to send his wife Sita to exile for the second time as he had to do because someone amongst his subjects, a washerman to be precise, had scolded his wife for her being late in returning home, saying that “I am not Ram who would accept a woman who lived with someone else”. He was referring to Sita having to spend time in captivity at Lanka. But inspite of this grave provocation, Lord Ram did not punish anyone of his subjects. Therefore, why is Lord Shiva being so harsh upon his own subjects at Kashi that he has unleashed the plague and misery associated with poverty upon them? Oh kind mother, take heed and redeem them!]

Considering this, oh Mother, on the prayer of this servant (child) of yours (i.e. Tulsidas), say atleast once that all these (sinful persons of Kashi) are none else but your own (children).

[Assure them that you are their ‘mother and protector’, and just like the case when children feel happy when their mother extends her loving protection to them, these suffering people of Kashi will too feel cheered and find solace in your benevolence. They have offended Lord Shiva, and are now so scared of the Lord just like children are of their father if they have in any way annoyed him that they dare not approach the Lord for mercy. But I, Tulsidas, am pleading their case before you as I have already done before Lord Shiva.]

Oh the Great Killer (*mahāmārī*) who is also the divine consort of Mahesh (i.e. Lord Shiva—*mahēsān*)! You are a treasury of great glory, auspiciousness and joys. These residents of Kashi are all your servants (children). [So, you must excuse them and have mercy on them.]’

[It is believed that contagious and epidemic diseases such as small-pox, eczema, diarrhoea, dysentery, typhoid fever, pestilence etc., which are mass killers, are caused by the curse of some goddess. Tulsidas therefore implies that if the plague infecting Kashi is to be eliminated, then Goddess Parvati must be propitiated.]

### Prayer to Lord Hanumān

(To provide succour to Kashi’s inhabitants)

लोगनिकें पाप कैधौ, सिद्ध-सुर-साप कैधौ,  
कालकें प्रताप कासी तिहूँ ताप तई है।  
ऊँचे, नीचे, बीचके, धनिक, रंग, राजा, राय  
हठनि बजाइ करि डीठि पीठि दई है॥  
देवता निहोरे, महामारिन्ह सों कर जोरे,  
भोरानाथ जानि भोरे आपनी-सी ठई है।  
करुनानिधान हनुमान बीर बलवान!  
जसरसि जहाँ-तहाँ तैहीं लूटि लई है॥175॥

175. lōganikēm pāpa kaidhaum, sid'dha-sura-sāpa kaidhaum,  
kālakēm pratāpa kāśī tihūm' tāpa ta'ī hai.  
ūm'cē, nīcē, bīcakē, dhanika, raṅga, rājā, rāya  
haṭhani bajā'i kari ḍīṭhi pīṭhi da'ī hai..  
dēvatā nihōrē, mahāmārinha sōm kara jōrē,  
bhōrānātha jāni bhōrē āpanī-sī ṭha'ī hai.  
karunānidhāna hanumāna bīra balavāna!

jasarāsi jahām̐-tahām̐ tainhīm̐ lūṭi la'ī hai..175..

Verse no. 7/175—[Being pained at seeing the suffering of the people of Kashi, the kind-hearted Tulsidas was greatly moved and moaned at their plight. See note below. So first he has prayed to Lord Shiva to requite them from their sufferings, and pardon their misdemeanours for which they are suffering in the first place—refer: verse nos. 169-172. Then Tulsidas pleads with Parvati to intervene and show her motherly mercy and compassion on them by removing their torments—refer: verse nos. 173-174.

Now in verse nos. 175-176 Tulsidas makes an earnest plea to Lord Hanuman, the most trusted and ablest devotee of Lord Ram who was also an incarnation of Lord Rudra, the 11<sup>th</sup> form of Shiva. In fact, since Lord Shiva wished to serve his beloved Lord Ram he assumed the form of Hanuman so that he could do so without fanfare and recognition. That is why amongst all the chief commanders of Lord Ram's army consisting of monkeys and bears which conquered Lanka and eliminated the cruel demons led by their king Ravana, Hanuman played the leading role, and he was most the outstanding and the most valiant of all the warriors.

Tulsidas knew the powers and potentials of Hanuman; he knew very well that if all powers-that-be fail against the onslaught of Kaliyug that has manifested in the form of the plague, it is only Hanuman who can take care of things and set the affairs straight. Even during Lord Ram's times, whenever the Lord needed some exceptionally difficult work to be done he chose Hanuman.

That is why Tulsidas now prays to Lord Hanuman to provide solace and succour to the people of Kashi who are suffering a lot under the cruel battering by Kaliyug as well as the plague.]

[Tulsidas wonders why Kashi is being subjected to such horrors. He ponders--]

'It is not certain whether it is the sins of the people, the curse of mystics and gods, or the affect of bad times that Kashi is burning in the so-called 'three fires' (of Traitap).

[These three fires are called: (i) 'Adhibhautik' meaning sufferings originating from the world and caused by its inhabitants and things; (ii) 'Adhidaivik' meaning sufferings caused by malignant stars and unfavourable gods; and (iii) 'Adhyatmik' meaning suffering related to spiritual matters.]

Everyone—whether of upper, middle or lower caste, whether rich or poor, whether a king or a knight—has turned apathetic and indifferent, turning their backs to the plight and suffering of the common man. In spite of seeing everything, they are making no efforts at all to alleviate the sufferings of the citizens.

[Tulsidas means that neither those who are able to help by providing financial, material, medical and other types of aids to the suffering people of Kashi, nor those who can help by providing manpower and physical service by way of personal effort and labour are coming out to help the suffering common man at Kashi. It's such a pitiful state of affairs that those who took solemn oath in the name of religion and Dharma that they are noble people who would gladly do their best to serve in the name of the Lord God have now turned stone-hearted.]

I have prayed to the Gods (refer verse no. 171, line nos. 3-4) and have joined my palms in supplication before the patron-goddess of pestilence (see last line of verse No. 174), but it appears that they are not paying any heed and doing what they want to do, thinking that 'Bholanath' (an epithet for Lord Shiva which means 'the Lord who



is the chief amongst the most simple-hearted, the naïve and simpleton Lords of the realm') is very carefree, overtly simpleton, and highly naïve.'

[Tulsidas has already prayed to Ganesh, Kaal-Bhairav, Dandapani-Bhairav (verse no. 171), Parvati, and the Goddess who controls contagious, epidemic diseases such as the scourge of the plague that has scarred Kashi (verse no. 173)—that it should be stopped. But the plague continues unabated. This indicates that these deities have no fear of Lord Shiva inspite of Tulsidas' hinting that Lord Shiva is the almighty Lord of the World whom even Lord Krishna respects—refer verse no. 172, line nos. 5-6. Why is this attitude of indifference and nonchalance? Tulsidas guesses that it is because these deities are not taking Lord Shiva seriously because they know that the Lord is a simple-hearted one who has the least care of the world, being an ascetic and an renunciate who remains engrossed in meditation and contemplation all the time. Perhaps this is the reason why they have scant regard for upsetting Lord Shiva by allowing trouble to spread over his realm and not doing their duty of maintaining peace and happiness at Kash properly.]

Otherwise, had Shiva been more alert, strict, and involved in worldly affairs, these deities, and for that matter even the humans who could have extended their help as narrated in line nos. 3-4 herein above, wouldn't have dared to show such apathy and indifference to the trouble that Kaliyug has spread in Kashi by way of the plague and moral degradation. They would have feared the wrath of Lord Shiva for being negligent and disobedient. But sadly they know that Shiva won't punish them!]

[Therefore, losing all hopes of expecting any help from others, Tulsidas now turns to Lord Hanuman because he is sure that his prayers would be answered. So he pleads with Hanuman—] 'Oh Lord Hanuman! You are a fount of mercy and compassion, as well as invincible, strong and brave! It is you whose glory and fame are spread and well-established in the whole world.<sup>1</sup>

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Tulsidas has approached Hanuman to give succour to the suffering people of Kashi because he has given up hope from any help from any other quarter. Though Lord Shiva is almighty and could have taken care of things, but he is such a simpleton and simple-hearted that the cunning Kaliyug has taken him for granted and decided that the Lord is naïve, and therefore would be easily deceived. Other gods and goddesses seem to take no interest because of Shiva's attitude of indifference and nonchalance. So what can be done. The only hope now left is Lord Hanuman.]

Further, since Hanuman is an incarnation of Lord Rudra, the 11<sup>th</sup> form of Shiva himself, there will be no offense or insult to Shiva if Hanuman is invoked and requested to intervene in the matter—because Hanuman is deemed to be another form of Shiva. Besides this, while Shiva as an image of a renunciate, dispassionate ascetic who is not concerned with anything related to the world but is always submerged in meditation and contemplation because he knows that all the sufferings that the creature is subjected to are limited to its gross body and do not affect the Atma, the soul, which is eternally blissful and peaceful, at all.

Shiva believes—being the patron deity of ascetics and hermits and therefore exemplifying their high spiritual thinking, as well as for being a highly self-realised and enlightened God himself who is well versed in the principles of metaphysics—that the suffering a creature goes through is the result of his own deeds, and it is better to undergo this suffering now than to postpone it and allow it to get accumulated and aggravated so that it raises its nasty hood at some later date in a more aggressive form. This is perhaps one of the main reasons why Shiva kept quiet when the people of Kashi suffered due to the plague and other miseries causing pain

to them. After all, didn't they all know in the first place that Kashi is a place where one comes to seek final liberation and deliverance from this materialistic world and the temptations of its sense objects? And then, inspite of this awareness, why did they get involved in all the crooked methods of the world while living in Kashi, thereby defiling the holiness and sacredness of place and ruining its hallowed reputation? Woe to them; let them suffer. It is their calling, and Shiva shouldn't be blamed a bit for any of it!

But nevertheless, a saint's heart is extremely delicate and easily moved by other's sufferings as opposed to the stern heart of a hermit and an ascetic who are accustomed to hardships and severe penances. So this is why Tulsidas is so concerned and moved at the pity of Kashi.

Now, he invokes the fame of Lord Hanuman as the remover of all sufferings of devotees. He knows that Hanuman is the most competent Authority to redress the grievances of the humble people of Kashi who are suffering hugely under the bludgeoning effects of Kaliyug. In fact, when Lord Ram departed for his heavenly abode at the end of Treta-yug, he had told Hanuman to stay behind and look after 'Dharma' (principles of good conduct as laid down in the scriptures) and afford protection to those who are righteous, noble, pious and simple-hearted in the forthcoming era of Kaliyug. The Lord knew what would befall men during this era, and how the Lord's guesses were correct is evident everywhere for all to see. The Lord had selected Hanuman to guard the good people in Kaliyug for the Lord knew that it is only him who is competent and able to carry out his orders—because all other forces would fail or yield to the might of Kaliyug.

Lord Ram's prophesy has proven to be so right now—because see, none of the gods and goddesses and able men are doing anything to check the forward roll of Kaliyug and its rampaging and tyrannical behaviour.

Hence, Tulsidas prays to Lord Hanuman to have mercy on the suffering people of Kashi.

There is a lot of symbolism here. Kashi, with its plague as well as the prevalent moral turpitude and sins there, is indicative of the negative influences that Kaliyug has cast over the whole world. Kashi has been selected by Tulsidas to magnify the horrors of Kaliyug because Kashi is protected by Lord Shiva, and therefore it was expected to be immune from the negative and degrading effects of Kaliyug. But it didn't happen. So, if Kaliyug is strong enough to cast its evil eye and evil will on such a sacred and protected place as Kashi, it is no wonder that it has overwhelmed the rest of the world and ensnared it in its firm vice-like grip of sins, vices, evil, worldly temptations, misdeeds, perversion and moral turpitude of every imaginable kind.]

संकर-सहर सर, नरनारि बारिचर  
 बिकल, सकल, महामारी माजा भई है।  
 उछरत उतरात हहरात मरि जात,  
 भभरि भगात जल-थल मीचुमई है।।  
 देव न दयाल, महिपाल न कृपालचित,  
 बारानसी बाढ़ति अनीति नित नई है।  
 पाहि रघुराज! पाहि कपिराज रामदूत!  
 रामहूकी बिगरी तुहीं सुधारि लई है।।176।।

176. saṅkara-sahara sara, naranāri bāricara  
 bikala, sakala, mahāmārī mājā bha'ī hai.  
 ucharata utarāta haharāta mari jāta,  
 bhabhari bhagāta jala-thala mīcuma'ī hai..  
 dēva na dayāla, mahipāla na krpālacita,  
 bārānasīm bārhati anīti nita na'ī hai.  
 pāhi raghurāja! pāhi kapirāja rāmadūta!  
 rāmahūkī bigarī tuhīm sudhāri la'ī hai..176..

Verse no. 7/176—[In this verse Tulsidas uses the metaphor of the aquatic animals suffering from a killer disease and the way they suffer from it to refer to the sufferings of the people of Kashi due to the plague. He continues with his prayer to Lord Hanuman as follows—]

‘The men and women in the form of aquatic creatures (naranāri bāricara) of this pond-like city of Lord Shankar (saṅkara-sahara sara), i.e. the inhabitants of Kashi whose patron deity is Lord Shiva, are extremely agitated and miserable. This pestilence is proving to be like a killer disease (called mājā) that afflicts aquatic creatures.

They jump, twist, squirm, swim and run helter-skelter in panic. They are extremely agitated and worried for their lives, and they are wailing and crying and dying. In this way, all habitat, the water as well as the land, has become a death-like trap for them.

[Some of the creatures jump out of the water on the surrounding land in the hope that they would survive death. Others who thought that the dry land would be a safer bet find it more hostile than their natural habitat in the water—so they jump back into the water of the pond. The whole pond is churning. In this verse, the ‘aquatic creature’ are the inhabitants of Kashi; the ‘pond’ is the city itself. Some of its residents flee the city to go to other places, and there they find they are not welcome. They are virtually beaten back to Kashi. Others find other cities worse because they lack even the basic comfort they used to get back home. So the people are running here and there to escape the horrors of the plague but find no succour anywhere. They are dying in hordes.]

At such a time, the Gods do not show mercy (or perhaps they are helpless against Kaliyug), and even the kings are not benevolent and favourable (as they keep themselves ensconced in their safe-houses so that they remain away from the reach of the infecting germs, showing scant regard for their moral duty to come to the aid of their subjects when the latter are suffering). As a result, injustice and lawlessness are increasing daily in Varanasi (Kashi).

Oh Lord Raghunath (i.e. Sri Ram)! I fall at your feet seeking your protection.

[Previously, in verse no. 175, line no. 6, Tulsidas has already called Lord Shiva a ‘Bholaanath’, i.e. the highly simple-hearted, naive and overtly simpleton Lord. Then he prays to Lord Hanuman to intervene and provide succour in verse no. 175. But then Tulsidas had a second thought: Hanuman cannot act without the permission of his own Lord, Sri Ram, who also happens to be the favoured deity of Tulsidas himself. So Tulsidas realised that he ought to first approach Lord Ram if he expects Hanuman to respond to his prayers. So therefore this saint makes an amend here—by offering his obeisance to Lord Ram with a plea for help.]

Oh king of monkeys (kapirāja) and the messenger of Lord Ram (rāmadūta)<sup>1</sup> (i.e. Hanuman)! I fall at your feet seeking your protection.

You (Hanuman) had taken care of the things when it looked bad for Sri Ram<sup>2</sup>. [So therefore, you must also take care of the things now when the devotees of Lord Ram are suffering so much.]’

[Here, Tulsidas clearly implies himself because surely he was a devotee of Lord Ram. This stanza also shows that there were great numbers of devotees of Lord Ram living in Kashi alongside the devotees of Lord Shiva. Both were suffering due to the plague. So Tulsidas means that if Lord Shiva and his commanders are not bothered about the sufferings of the devotees of Shiva, what can be done. But Hanuman should at least protect the devotees of Lord Ram who is Hanuman’s as well as Tulsidas’ beloved Lord. It is Hanuman’s moral obligation to offer protection to them.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Lord Ram had sent his message to Sita through Hanuman. Hence, the term ‘rāmadūta’. Even Hanuman calls himself a messenger of Lord Ram. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 13.

<sup>2</sup>This refers to that time when Lord Ram had sent messengers to search for his abducted wife Sita. It was Hanuman who had crossed the mighty ocean and found Sita held captive at Lanka. When Lord Ram was informed that Hanuman has located Sita, the Lord had expressed his obligation to him—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 5-8 that precede Doha no. 32.

Another occasion was when Laxman fell unconscious upon being hit by an arrow in the battle-field of Lanka. The medicinal herb needed for his revival was to be had from the northern-most mountains in the mainland across the ocean. Once again, Hanuman went and brought the whole mountain so that the necessary herb could be selected and Laxman brought back to life. At that time also, Lord Ram had expressed his deep appreciation of Hanuman—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 62.

All the verses, from 169 onwards, show that Tulsidas is sincerely worried about the welfare of the people of Varanasi or Kashi. After praying to Shiva and Parvati and sundry other gods, and expecting no succour from them, he finally decided to petition his supreme Lord Sri Ram as well as the Lord’s faithful, trusted and obedient devotee, his flag-bearer, points-man, trouble-shooter and marks-man, i.e. Lord Sri Hanuman. This also shows that perhaps he had prayed to Shiva and Parvati because they are the patron deities of the city, but Tulsidas had not much of an expectation from them. This is also evident from verse no. 165 wherein he says that he is petitioning Shiva just as a formality. His true expectations are only from Sri Ram and none else.]

### Beseeching Lord Rām to Help

एक तौ कराल कलिकाल सूल-मूल, तामें  
कोढमेंकी खाजु-सी सनीचरी है मीनकी ।  
बेद-धर्म दूरि गए, भूमि चोर भूप भए,  
साधु सीद्यमान जानि रीति पाप पीनकी ।।  
दूबरेको दूसरो न द्वार, राम दयाधाम !  
रावरीऐ गति बल-बिभव बिहीन की ।  
लागैगी पै लाज वा बिराजमान बिरुदहि,  
महाराज ! आजु जौ न देत दादि दीनकी ।। 177 ।।

177. ēka tau karāla kalikāla sūla-mūla, tāmēṁ  
 kōḍhamēṁkī khāju-sī sanīcarī hai mīnakī.  
 bēda-dharma dūri ga'ē, bhūmi cōra bhūpa bha'ē,  
 sādhu sīdyamāna jāni rīti pāpa pīnakī..  
 dūbarēkō dūsarō na dvāra, rāma dayādhamā!  
 rāvarī'ai gati bala-bibhava bihīna kī.  
 lāgaigī pai lāja vā birājamāna birudahi,  
 mahārāja! āju jaum na dēta dādi dīnakī..177..

Verse no. 7/177—On the one hand there is this terrible period of Kaliyug (which in its self is no less nuisance and troubling), and on the other hand, to compound the matters and make them worse, there is the evil planet Saturn sitting in the house of Pisces which is aggravating all the horrors of suffering like the case when itch appears on a leprosy wound.

[The festering wound of leprosy is horrible in its self, then if an itch starts on it one can well imagine the situation for the patient. Likewise, the horrors created by Kaliyug are themselves immense, and they are aggravated by the fact that Saturn, the planet with an evil eye that is renowned to cause sufferings upon whom it allows its curse to fall, sits in the house of Pisces. This location of Saturn is the worst in the astrological chart when everything goes awry and wrong, when everything and everyone and every situation turn hostile. It portends nothing but suffering and ill-omen of the worst kind for the world.]

That is why Dharma (righteous path) as sanctioned by the Vedas has simply vanished, the robbers and looters have become kings, and the saints are sorrowful on seeing the enhanced status of sins, ascendance of vices and dominance of evil and perversion of the worst kind.

Oh Lord Sri Ram, the abode of mercy! There is no other door to obtain solace and succour for the weak and the meek except yours. Oh Lord! Those men who are humble and lack strength, abilities and resources to cope with and stand against the juggernaut and the battering-ram of Kaliyug that is sledge-hammering its way through the world, bludgeoning and bastinadoing whatso comes in its way under its relentless onslaught, have you as their only hope, support and succour.

Oh Lord! If you do no help these two (the weak/meek and those devoid of strength/fame/resources), your fame will have to be ashamed of itself (i.e. you shall get a bad name that you did not take care of the distressed, the wretched, the meek, the needy, the humble and the sinful persons despite you being called the friend of the distressed and those in need, being the most merciful, kind, benevolent, magnanimous Lord of creation).'

[In other words, Tulsidas exhorts Lord Ram that he should provide succour and solace to all the suffering humanity who are being tormented by Kaliyug. Tulsidas virtually implores the merciful and compassionate Lord Ram that he ought to, he should, he must, and he has to intervene and afford protection to his devotees.]

### The Glory of Lord Rām's Holy Name

रामनाम मातु-पितु, स्वामि समर्थ, हितु,  
 आस रामनामकी, भरोसो रामनामको ।  
 प्रेम रामनामहीसों, नेम रामनामहीको,

जानौं नाम मरम पद दाहिनो न बामको ।।  
 स्वास्थ सकल परमास्थको रामनाम,  
 रामनाम हीन तुलसी न काहू कामको ।  
 रामकी सपथ, सरबस मेरै रामनाम,  
 कामधेनु-कामतरु मोसे छीन छामको ।।178 ।।

178. rāmanāma mātu-pitu, svāmi samaratha, hitu,  
 āsa rāmanāmakī, bharōsō rāmanāmakō.  
 prēma rāmanāmahīsōṁ, nēma rāmanāmahīkō,  
 jānauṁ nāma marama pada dāhinō na bāmakō..  
 svāratha sakala paramārathakō rāmanāma,  
 rāmanāma hīna tulasī na kāhū kāmako.  
 rāmakī sapatha, sarabasa mērēm rāmanāma,  
 kāmadhēnu-kāmataru mōsē chīna chāmakō..178..

Verse no. 7/178—[In this verse, Tulsidas glorifies the Holy Name of Lord Ram, an incarnate Supreme Being.]

‘Lord Sri Ram’s Holy Name is like my parent, an able master, and a favourable Lord who is concerned about my good and welfare at all times.

I have all types of hopes and expectations from Lord Sri Ram’s name, and I rely only on it.

It is only Lord Sri Ram’s name that I love, and (remembrance and repetition of the Holy Name is) the only routine, ritual and system of worship that I follow.

Besides Lord Sri Ram’s name, I am unaware of any other type of favourable or unfavourable path (regarding my spiritual and worldly well-being). It is Lord Sri Ram’s Holy Name only that can help me achieve all my self-interests in this world as well as take care of my salvation (and fate after death).

[That is, I have a single path to follow, and there is no confusion in my mind as to which path from amongst the many available to select so that I can reach my destination and attain what I wish for myself.]

Tulsidas is worth nothing without Lord Sri Ram’s Holy Name. I swear and say truthfully in the Name of Lord Sri Ram—that Lord Sri Ram’s Holy Name is everything for me, and for a wretched, weak and meek person like me, it is akin to the all wish fulfilling ‘Kamdhenu cow’ and the ‘Kalpa Tree’. [This cow and the tree have a reputation that anything asked from them is given. Hence, Tulsidas says that Lord Ram’s Holy Name is akin to these two entities for him.]

[Note—The glory and divinity of Lord Ram’s Holy Name is elaborately enumerated in (a) Vinai Patrika, verse nos. 46, 65-70; (b) Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 19—to Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 28; and (b) in our present book Kavitawali, Uttar Kand, verse nos. 36. 89-93.]

### Earning by Wrongful Means

मारण मारि, महीसुर मारि, कुमारण कोटिककै धन लीयो ।  
 संकरकोपसौ पापको दाम परिच्छित जाहिगो जारि कै हीयो ।।  
 कासीमें कंटक जेते भये ते गे पाइ अघाइ कै आपनो कीयो ।  
 आजु कि कालि परों कि नरों जड जाहिंगे चाटि दिवारीको दीयो ।।179 ।।

179. mārāga mārī, mahīsura mārī, kumārāga kōṭīkakai dhana liyō.  
 saṅkarakōpasōm pāpakō dāma paricchita jāhigō jāri kai hīyō..  
 kāsimēm kaṇṭaka jētē bhayē tē gē pā'i aghā'i kai āpanō kīyō.  
 āju ki kāli parōm ki narōm jaḍa jāhiṅgē cāṭi divārīkō dīyō..179..

Verse no. 7/179—[In this verse, saint Tulsidas sternly chides and lambasts those who earn money by adopting all unscrupulous and dishonest means they can think of. He warns them that nothing but sorrows and pain would be in store for them

‘All those people who have accumulated wealth by robbing travellers, tormenting Brahmins and by many other unlawful, sinful and unrighteous means—all their wealth shall leave them with a burning heart due to the wrath of Lord Shiva. Verily, this fact is well established and tested.

All the sinners who had been in Kashi perished after suffering the results of their evil deeds (due to the plague).

Today, tomorrow or the day after, they are certain to go like a serpent does after licking the oil-lamp lit during the Diwali festival.’

[It is said that a serpent licks the lamp lit during the festival of lights known as Diwali, and then goes away never to return again. Similarly, these sinners will be destroyed and no trace of them would be left in Kashi.]

### Good Omen at Kāshi

कुंकुम-रंग सुअंग जितो, मुखचंदसों चंदसों होइ परी है।  
 बोलत बोल समृद्धि चुवै, अवलोकत सोच-बिषाद हरी है॥  
 गौरी कि गंग बिहंगिनिबेष, कि मंजुल मूरति मोदभरी है।  
 पेखि सप्रेम पयान समै सब सोच-बिमोचन छेमकरी है॥180॥

180. kuṁkuma-raṅga su'aṅga jitō, mukhacandasōm candasōm hōṛa parī hai.  
 bōlata bōla samṛd'dhi cuvai, avalōkata sōca-biśāda harī hai..  
 gaurī ki gaṅga bihaṅginibēśa, ki maṇjula mūrati mōdabharī hai.  
 pēkhi saprēma payāna samai saba sōca-bimōcana chēmakarī hai..180..

Verse no. 7/180—[In this verse, Tulsidas sites an instance when he saw a good omen, igniting hope of redemption and peace being restored in Kashi. It is in the form of a bird called ‘Chemkari’ which is a Kite with the colour of the body that is yellow with a red tinge, and a beak that is white (the ‘Milvus milvus’ and other species). Its sight is regarded as auspicious. Here, he describes it.]

‘Is it goddess Gauri (Parvati, the divine consort of Lord Shiva) or is it the holy river Ganges that have personified themselves in the form of a bird called ‘Chemkari’ (a red coloured Kite with a white beak, the sight of which is regarded as a good omen).

This Chemkari’s red colour is more attractive and charming than Kum-Kum (red oxide powder that is applied as a dot-mark on the forehead of women, or as a line along the parting of their hair on the head). Its face competes with the disc of the moon in its beauty and auspiciousness. All types of successes and welfares drip when it speaks (i.e. its voice is very sweet and welcome), and it steals (i.e. removes) all worries and lamentations just by the sight of it.

Or is it the image of some other Goddess who embodies the virtues of peace and happiness? When it (Chemkari) is viewed with affection and respect at the time of venturing out for any place, it helps to eliminate all types of sorrows and worries. [That is, if Chemkari is viewed when one is going out for any work, it is considered to be a good omen and a provider of all auspiciousness and successes.]

[Note—Refer also to Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 2-8 that precedes Doha no. 303.]

### Importance of Kāshi

मंगलकी रासि, परमारथकी खानि जानि  
 बिरचि बनाई बिधि, केसव बसाई है।  
 प्रलयहूँ काल राखी सूलपानि सूलपर,  
 मीचुबस नीच सोऊ चाहत खसाई है॥  
 छाडि छितिपाल जो परीछित भए कृपाल,  
 भलो कियो खलको, निकाई सो नसाई है।  
 पाहि हनुमान्! करुनानिधान राम पाहि!  
 कासी-कामधेनु कलि कुहत कसाई है॥181॥

181. maṅgalakī rāsi, paramārathakī khāni jāni  
 biraci banā'ī bidhi, kēsava basā'ī hai.  
 pralayahūṁ kāla rākhī sūlapāni sūlapara,  
 mīcubasa nīca sō'ū cāhata khasā'ī hai..  
 chāḍi chitipāla jō parīchita bha'e krpāla,  
 bhalō kiyō khalakō, nikā'ī sō nasā'ī hai.  
 pāhi hanumān! karunānidhāna rāma pāhi!  
 kāśī-kāmadhēnu kali kuhata kasā'ī hai..181..

Verse no. 7/181—[In this verse, Tulsidas extols the glory of Kashi. Refer also to verse no. 172 of Uttar Kand herein above.]

‘The Creator has created Kashi as a treasury of auspiciousness and a mine that can provide salvation to the creature, and Lord Vishnu has established it himself.

[Kashi is a pilgrim place where Lord Shiva symbolically resides in a subtle form, and the Lord provides liberation and deliverance to the dying creature, whether a human or any other species of the animal kingdom, by uttering the holy name of Lord Ram in its ears. It is an endless process. Hence the use of the terms ‘mine’ and ‘treasury’ that indicate an abundant, endless and continuous source of spiritual liberation and deliverance.]

At the time of dooms-day (the time of annihilation of the world), Lord Shiva had saved it on the point of his Trident.

But it is so sad and astonishing that this wicked Kaliyug tries to topple it from its exalted pedestal of blessedness (by applying all tricks it knows of for degrading it and making it rife with corruption, sins and vices of all sorts).

[It is a paradox that while Lord Shiva had held Kashi aloft on the tip of his Trident when the rest of the world was submerged in the deluge of dooms-day, Kaliyug is trying all that is within its might to topple it and ruin it.]



It looks that impending ‘death’ or the time for dooms-day has come which has corrupted its prudence and wisdom so much that it has thrown all caution to the wind and has become extremely bold and reckless.

[Perhaps this is why even Lord Shiva is not doing anything to alleviate the suffering so widespread in Kashi. It is because he is 3<sup>rd</sup> God of the Trinity who is assigned the duty of concluding this mortal world at the end of the 4-Yug period in the endless cycle of birth and death, or of creation, growth and winding up. Kaliyug is the 4<sup>th</sup> era of this 4-Yug cycle, and according to the scriptures it would culminate in the end of the current phase of the eternal cycle. Therefore, Kaliyug too shouldn’t be blamed for the misery and death it has unleashed; it is a part of the greater mandate of the Creator and a phase in the eternal cycle of creation, growth and death.]

King Parikshit had spared and obliged him (Kaliyug) and did him good<sup>1</sup>, but this rascal (Kaliyug) had forgotten that kindness and favour showed to him by Parikshit.

Oh Lord Hanuman! Save us. Oh the abode of mercy, Lord Sri Ram! Save us. This Kaliyug in the shape of a butcher is killing this cow representing Kashi.

[Note—<sup>1</sup>King Parikshit sparing Kaliyug—This story is narrated in Srimad Bhagwat, Skandha 1, Cantos 16-18. Briefly it is as follows—

During the concluding phases of the 3<sup>rd</sup> era known as Dwapar (in which Lord Krishna was born as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu), the great King named Parikshit was greatly alarmed and peeved by the way Kaliyug, still in its infancy, had started baring its teeth and showing its true colours by tormenting earth by way of undermining all principles of Dharma (good conduct). Furious at this nuisance, Parikshit drew his sword to slay it, but Kaliyug fell at his feet pleading for mercy. The righteous king thought that it is highly improper to kill someone who has surrendered, so he excused Kaliyug but gave him an option that if he wants to survive then he must restrict himself to four selected places—viz. gambling (greed and rapacity for easy money), drinking of wine (getting intoxicated and losing one’s sense of bearing as to what is wrong and what is right), womenising (promiscuity, passion and lust), and blood-spilling (like killing others, terrorism and strife). Since all these were nasty places, Kaliyug pleaded that one more ‘good’ place be added to the list of places where he can live. So Parikshit granted ‘gold’. As soon as this boon was given, the scoundrel that Kaliyug was, he immediately leapt and took up his place in the ‘golden crown’ of Parikshit himself.

The result was that Parikshit, who was hitherto the most upright, righteous and wise king of his time, suddenly developed all the negative attitudes that are the hallmarks of Kaliyug. He lost all sense of prudence and scruples. Once, while on his way to hunt, Parikshit, who was wearing a golden crown in which sat Kaliyug, saw a hermit who was lost in meditation and he did not get up to show respect to the king of the realm, i.e. Parikshit. Angry, Parikshit wrapped a dead serpent around the hermit’s neck to tease him. The exalted hermit said nothing, but his son cursed Parikshit that a vicious snake called ‘Takshak’ would bite him on the seventh day from then.

Sure of death, the king sought refuge with sage Veda Vyas who narrated to him the glories of Lord Vishnu by reciting the famed scripture Srimad Bhagwat Mahapurana during this seven-day grace period. Parikshit got his liberation from hell and went to heaven, but ever since then he has regretted why he allowed Kaliyug to survive at all.]

बिरची बिरंचिकी, बसति बिस्वनाथकी जो,

प्रानहू तें प्यारी पुरी केसव कृपालकी ।  
 जोतिरूप लिंगमई अगनित लिंगमयी  
 मोच्छ बितरनि, बिदरनि जगजालकी ।।  
 देबी - देव - देवसरि - सिद्ध - मुनिबर - बास  
 लोपति-बिलोकत कुलिपि भोंडे भालकी ।  
 हा हा करै तुलसी, दयानिधान राम! ऐसी  
 कासीकी कदर्थना कराल कलिकालकी ।।182 ।।

182. biracī biran̄cikī, basati bisvanāthakī jō,  
 prānahū tēm pyārī purī kēsava krpālakī.  
 jōtirūpa liṅgama'ī aganita liṅgamayī  
 mōccha bitarani, bidarani jagajālakī..  
 dēbī - dēva - dēvasari - sid'dha - munibara - bāsa  
 lōpati-bilōkata kulipi bhōṇḍē bhālakī.  
 hā hā karai tulasī, dayānidhāna rāma! aisī  
 kāsīkī kadarthanā karāla kalikālakī..182..

Verse no. 7/182—(Further describing the glories of Kashi, Tulsidas says)—

It (Kashi) is created by Brahma, is the capital of Viswanath (Lord of the Universe; Shiva), and is more dear to the merciful and kind Vishnu than his own life.

The entire city (of Kashi) is like a living image of one of Lord's Shiva's self-illuminated symbol called the 'Jyotilingam of Shiva'. Not only this, there are countless smaller or minor Lingams in the city which are visible signs of its unique character<sup>1</sup>. These Lingams are symbols that remind the people that Lord Shiva is always at hand to provide them with liberation and deliverance if they so desire.

It (Kashi) is the abode (habitat) of Gods, Goddesses, the holy river Ganges (the river of Gods), mystics and the attained-ones, and it can erase the line of ill-luck etched on the forehead of the luck-less by the creator Brahma.

[Kashi is an auspicious place, like a crown among all pilgrim places. It is special as it is the abode of various forms of Divinity. Here, bad luck turns to good luck as it is blessed by such exalted presence as Lord Shiva, goddess Parvati, Lord Ganesh etc., and the holy river Ganges.]

It is such an extremity of wonder and paradoxical that even such an exalted, holy and sacrosanct city of Kashi has not been spared by Kaliyug, and it has been reduced to such a sorry state of affairs (as has been described in the various verses herein above, such as the plight of plague, misfortunes such as poverty, spiritual and moral degradation, prevalent vices such jealousy, falsehood, deceit, trickery etc.) that are rampant here.

Seeing all this, Tulsidas moans, grieves and laments, and prays to his beloved Lord Sri Ram, pleading with him—'Alas, alas!! Oh Lord Sri Ram who is an abode of mercy and compassion! Look at the horrible state of affairs at Kashi that the crooked Kaliyug has unleashed here. It (Kaliyug) has not even spared it (Kashi).

[In spite of knowing very well the special place that Kashi occupies in the community of pilgrim places, Kaliyug has not failed to bare his ugly face here also. Oh Lord Ram, can't you see how bold and arrogant it has become? I have lost all hopes of any expectation of succour from any other quarter, though I have prayed to this and that deity selflessly, so finally I have come to your door with a most humble request to protect Kashi from Kaliyug because you are a merciful and compassionate Lord of all, and you are capable to do what I request of you.

Oh Lord! I don't have any personal self-interest in this prayer, but my heart agonises and moans at the suffering I see all around me. I know that these are the same people who had been tormenting me and I had myself pleaded with Lord Shiva to look into the matter (refer: verse nos. 165-168), and I also guess that these sufferings of the people are a punishment that Lord Shiva has given them and perhaps this is the reason why Lord Shiva kept quiet when I pleaded with him to provide succour to Kashi's sufferings (refer: verse nos. 169-172 herein above, and no. 183 herein below), and so did Parvati and other gods and goddesses (verse nos. 173-175). But oh merciful Lord Sri Ram, I feel guilty that my own sufferings have resulted in mass suffering of the people of Kashi like they had never undergone before nor shall ever after. So oh my dear Lord Ram, please clear my conscience and relieve the sufferings caused by Kaliyug.

See, otherwise the world would say—'Lord Ram is not merciful as Tulsidas claims him to be. So oh Lord, make haste and doest what thou wilt to evict and banish Kaliyug from Kashi.' ]'

[Note—<sup>1</sup>There are belived to be 12 Jyotilingams. The word has two parts—'Jyoti' meaning illumination, and 'Lingam' meaning a form that is like an erect cylinder, and it is a symbol of Lord Shiva. The entire realm of Kashi is a symbolic Lingam of Shiva because the Lord lives there in an invisible form, everywhere in it in an omnipresent subtle form. But for the less enlightened and uninitiated, this omnipresent form of Shiva is revealed in the form of many smaller Lingams that dot Kashi.

It is a sort of reminder to its inhabitants as well as visitors that they are living under the watchful eyes of Shiva. It is almost like the presence of policemen at every street corner to remind the citizens that they are safe on the one hand, and to alert criminals that they are under watch on the other hand!]

आश्रम-बरन कलि बिबस बिकल भए  
निज-निज मरजाद मोटरी-सी डार दी।  
संकर सरोष महामारिहीतें जानियत,  
साहिब सरोष दुनी-दिन-दिन दारदी।।  
नारि-नर आरत पुकारत, सुनै न कोऊ,  
काहूँ देवतनि मिलि मोटी मूठि मारि दी।  
तुलसी सभितपाल सुमिरें कृपालराम  
समय सुकरुना सराहि सनकार दी।।183।।

183. āśrama-barana kali bibasa bikala bha'e  
nija-nija marajāda mōṭarī-sī ḍāra dī.  
saṅkara sarōśa mahāmārihītēṁ jāniyata,  
sāhiba sarōśa dunī-dina-dina dāradī..  
nāri-nara ārata pukārata, sunai na kō'ū,  
kāhūṁ dēvatani mili mōṭī mūṭhi māri dī.  
tulasī sabhitapāla sumirēṁ kṛpālarāma  
samaya sukarunā sarāhi sanakāra dī..183..

Verse no. 7/183—The people of various Ashrams and Varnas<sup>1</sup> have become reckless, unscrupulous, disobedient and wayward. They have abandoned all sense of probity and propriety, and they fail to carry out their designated roles and duties in society as if the latter were great and cumbersome burdens that are best discarded.

[The result being, there is utter chaos and anarchy everywhere in society. Everyone is doing what he wishes or thinks fit. No one listens to wise council.]

The anger and wrath of Lord Shiva (at this sorry state of affairs) is apparent from the plague which hit Kashi. It is also because of Shiva's wrath that poverty, misfortunes, unhappiness, troubles, agonies and sorrows are increasing day by day in this world. Men and women wail, cry-out and plead in distress, but there is no one to listen to their call.

It appears that some of the Gods had become so angry and peeved at the perversion and evil that has permeated the society that they decided to shoot a 'Mūṭhi' (a magical killing charm usually consisting of a group of words called Mantras and shot at the opponent to harm him) to kill these wretched rascals (by spreading pestilence). But when these Gods suddenly realised that Lord Sri Ram has intervened on the behalf of the suffering humanity (on the prayers of Tulsidas), and knowing very well that the Lord is very merciful, compassionate and able who tolerates no hindrance while giving protection to a miserable man once he comes to seek the Lord's refuge, these same Gods beat a hasty retreat. They started appreciating the Lord's merciful nature and changed their track, made an about-turn, and ordered the 'Mūṭhi' to withdraw (as a result of which the pestilence disappeared).

[Tulsidas had made a final appeal to Lord Ram in the previous verse no. 182. The Lord heeded forthrightly and the plague began to abate. This is the concluding verse of Kavita-wali which ends on a positive and hopeful note; a 'happy ending' so to say.]

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The society has been divided into four subtle divisions for the purpose of its regulation and ease of its administration. These four divisions are called 'Varnas', and they are the following—Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Members of each division have their role in society clearly marked and are expected to do their duties faithfully and diligently. Ancient sages and seers had envisioned this hierarchical system so that the society functions smoothly and each member knows what he or she is expected to do. This helps in proper administration and regulation of the society, proper maintenance of its law and order, as well as in fixing accountability.

But these four divisions were not water-tight compartments, and since their primary aim was maintenance and proper functioning of the society, these roles smoothly merged into one another at their meeting points.

For instance, though 'Brahmins' were primarily the elderly class well versed in the scriptures and assigned the job of acting as teachers, guides, advisors and preceptors, they was no bar for them to act as regents and warriors to protect others should the situation so demand.

The 'Kshatriya' was primarily responsible for giving protection to the society so that the rest of its members can carry out their duties without fear.

The society had to be fed and provided with material comfort and needs of daily life. This was the duty of the 'Vaishya' who was essentially of the trading community generating wealth and providing for the necessities of life.

But there should be someone who will attend to manual labour and serve the society so that its other members are freed from the grind of humdrum affairs of life to carry out their own duties. These were the 'Sudras'. They did manual work which we ordinarily call a servant's job. All types of tradesmen, craftsmen, smiths etc, such as washermen, carpenters, blacksmiths, farmers, herdsmen, boatmen, and countless other vocations and professions that made the society's wheel running and well-oiled were classified as 'Sudra'. The scriptures call them the 'foot of the man' in the sense

that just as a man can't stand up to do anything or go anywhere without his legs, the society won't be able to stand up and function without the help of Sudras. It is obvious that the term 'Sudra' was not meant to demean or degrade any member of the society at large, for in fact they formed the base or foundation upon which the society stood and functioned without having to worry about physical support by way of manual labour that can help the Brahmin, the Kshatriya and the Vaishya perform their duties properly.

Similarly, the life of a man was divided into four quarters—viz. Brahmcharya, Grihastha, Vaanprastha and Sanyas. Each quarter was of approximately 20-25 years. The first quarter is when a man was supposed to study and learn the skills that are needed for the affairs of an adult life. This was 'Brahmcharya Ashram'. The word literally means a celibate and one who exercises self-restraint. This was essential for study and inculcating skills which require focus of mind and heart.

The second quarter is 'Grihastha Ashram'. It is when the student enters the household phase of life. He marries, raises a family and carries on with his profession or vocation to increase wealth and progeny.

When a person becomes ripe in age, his working capacity decreases and he must prepare to pass on the baton to the next generation, to his heirs when they are ready to step in his shoes, and when he has done his bit for society. This is the 'Vaanprastha Ashram'—the third phase of life. It literally means 'heading for the forest', but not necessarily. Its primary function is to withdraw from playing an active role in the affairs of the world and give one's mind and body rest and peace after the toil of the previous years. In ancient times though it actually meant going to the forest and spending time in a serene place in some hermitage. But in modern times it is neither feasible nor advisable. The best avenue is to withdraw from active role and serve more as an advisor and guide for the next generation in a dispassionate manner.

The final and fourth quarter is called 'Sanyas Ashram' which clearly means absolute withdrawal from the world and its affairs. This is the time when the man is of about say 70 or more years of age. So he needs complete peace and should prepare to make an exit from the world without a fuss. He is expected to create such a situation that no one misses or wails for him nor anything suffers due to his absence. Thus, he dies peacefully and self-contentedly.

As will be clearly observed by the above reading that our ancient forefathers and patriarchs had been wise and prudent in establishing this four segment heirarchical system in society.

Now, in the context of the present verse, Tulsidas means that this discipline has vanished. People are doing whatever they want. There is utter chaos and anarchy in society due to dominance of evil influences of Kaliyug. It is just like misgovernance in a country when the administrative machinery collapses and there is complete mayhem everywhere.]

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## APPENDIX (1.1)

### Author's Musings

1- Tulsidas has never boasted or bragged of being a saint; he has never claimed to have started a new doctrine or philosophy, or have ever thought evil of even his tormentors. Each verse of Kavitawali in Uttar Kand shows that he is simply asking his Lord to offer him salvation and liberation from the cycle of re-birth. His humility and wisdom shines through (sample the verse nos. 7/104-108). He did not want a followership; infact, he was hounded like a heretic by the pundits of his days, but he said nothing to anybody (verse no. 7/106). On the contrary, he prayed for their deliverance (verse 7/169-177)

Tulsidas' message was for brotherhood, peace and abandonment of the so-called false or pseudo religions. He poignantly points out the state of affairs while describing Kaliyug in verse nos. 7/83-88, 7/97-109, 7/182.

If Lord Sri Ram is our Lord (read Father) and we are all his servants (sons), then aren't we all related to each other as siblings, or atleast as kins or cousins? Again, which father is so stone-hearted who would turn aside leaving his children to suffer? An ordinary human father wouldn't, so how can the eternal Father? This is Tulsidas' simple logic. The catch is—do we treat the eternal Father as our Lord, and do we submit ourselves before him as a good child/servant. We do not do our bid, and expect Him to act his part. And still he takes care of us. Isn't he great? (verse 7/23-24, 37-50, 53, 177-178, 183). Isn't this what Tulsidas says in essence?

Tulsidas had the moral guts to boldly adminish the distortions which were either deliberately or uncannily injected or interpolated into the precepts of our Vedas and other scriptures, and over time, they became established customs, reducing religion to a mere mechanical ritual, superstition, blind belief and following, all of which helped to serve vested interests while robbing religion of its basic ingredients and purity of purpose. This is evident in his description of Kaliyug. (refer verse 7/84-86, 96, 99, 103, 105)

2- It would be noted that Aranya Kand and Kiskindha Kand are both written as single verses. This is indeed a remarkable craft used by the master narrator to highlight and focus our attention to what he wishes to say. There is no clutter, no confusion—only a single incident to focus.

The 'Aranya Kand' of Kavitawali describes how Sita saw a gold-skinned deer and asked Sri Ram to 'bring' it. The exact words mean 'Sita said something sweet to

Sri Ram about the deer'. Now she might have meant to keep it as a pet to keep company in a lonely forest. When Sri Ram got up, then naturally, the animal ran away. Sri Ram pursued it quite far. Had he wanted, he could have easily killed it much near the hut itself by a single arrow. But, as it would be, even after a long chase, he couldn't catch it. Sri Ram became disgusted because if he returned empty handed without capturing it, it would be very humiliating for a Kshatriya prince. So, he finally decided to shoot it down.

Further, this incident highlights the evils of desire, greed and want. If Sita had not wanted that golden deer, the story of Ram would have been totally different. There would have been no kidnapping of Sita, no war at Lanka and no nothing, so to say. The couple would have returned to Ayodhya at the end of the exile period, be coronated as king and queen and live happily ever after !

3- Similarly, 'Kiskindha Kand's' single verse highlights the efforts we must make to achieve our goal; we should not be cowed down by adversity and impossibility of the task at hand. Even the vast ocean was covered by a single jump of Hanuman, and astonishingly for an age when perhaps science of navigation, as we know it today, was not known, he did not lose his way.

The bridge was constructed over a turbulent and ferocious ocean, with buffeting, heaving and foaming ocean waves. Even with all the powers of science, implements, engineering and knowledge at his command, a modern man finds it a herculean task to build a bridge over a swiftly flowing river, what to talk of a stone floating bridge, with each boulder free to flow away as soon as it was put on the water! Isn't this absolutely marvellous and miraculous ?

4- There is a verse in Kavitawali regarding the burning of Chitrakoot. (verse no. 7/143). One wonders why Tulsidas chose to narrate the incident, specially when he holds the place in high esteem (see verse no. 7/141). As is the wont of the poet, he means something very deep and subtle while appearing innocuous on the surface. This mysterious fire was meant as a warning for the people of Kaliyug. I have described my views in the brief comment appended to the translation of verse no. 7/143 itself.

In similar vein, Tulsidas alludes to the retribution awaiting the culprits who cheat and defraud in the name of religion by way of pestilence/plague in Varanasi (verse no. 7/169-172).

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## APPENDIX (1.2)

### SPEED OF HANUMAN AS HE LEAPT ACROSS THE OCEAN

When we read about Hanuman's giant leap across the ocean or his flight across the sky to bring the Sanjivani herb, we are inspired to query about his probable speed in flight.

An attempt is made below to mathematically derive his speed with reference to Kishikindha Kand verse no. 5/0 and Lanka Kand verse nos. 6/54, 6/55.

(1) The distance between Lanka and Himalayas, where the Sanjivani herb was found :-

(a) Distance between North and South tips of India—from North most tip of Kashmir (latitude  $37^{\circ} 06'$ , longitude  $74^{\circ} 42'$ ) and Cape-Comorin (latitude  $8^{\circ} 04'$ , longitude  $77^{\circ} 33'$ ) = appx. 3200 km.

Add (b) Distance between the coasts of India and Lanka

In Ram Charit Manas, Kishkindha Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 29 it is said that—

jō nāgha'i sata jōjana sāgara. kara'i sō rāma kāja mati āgara. (R.C.M. 4/29/1)

The distance was 100 yojans = 800 miles (1 yojan = 4 or 8 or 16 miles; but 8 miles is regarded as the median and the correct measure)

Since 1 mile = 1.609 km.

∴ 800 miles =  $1.609 \times 800 = 1287.20$  km.

∴ Total distance =  $3200 + 1287$  km. = 4487 km.

(2) Time taken to cover this distance :-

In those times, the wars were fought on some principles—and one of the most important one was that all fighting stopped after sun-set and did not start before sun-rise. The same principle was also followed in the Mahabharat war.

Assuming that sun set at 6 p.m. and sun rose at 6 a.m., the total hours available = 12 hours

After the battle ended for the day, a search for Laxman began; then after he was located, a search for the doctor began, and the latter named Sushen was brought, who prescribed the Sanjivani herb to be brought from the Himalayas. Hanuman sailed through the sky but was intercepted by Kalnemi; then he spent some precious moments trying to identify the herb, and being unable to do so, uprooted the entire



mountain. On the way back, he was shot down by Bharat at Nandigram (near Ayodhya). All those incidents nibbled at the precious minutes ticking away. He had not arrived back till midnight (अर्द्ध राति गइ कपि नहीं आयउ। RCM 6/61/2). When all hopes were lost—because Laxman had to be revived before the on-set of or during ‘Brahma-Murth’ or around 4-5 a.m., Hanuman was suddenly sighted. The herb was administered and Laxman was revived. At about the same time Kumbhakaran was woken up from his sleep, he feasted on buffaloes, wine and thereafter plunged into battle.

It means that not much time elapsed between Hanuman’s arrival and the start of the battle next day at roughly 6 a.m. So, safely assuming that Laxman was revived at around 4-5 a.m. in the Brahma-Murth, the time is calculated as follows :-

Appx. time the battle ended for the day—6 p.m.

Appx. time of revival of Laxman (Brahma-Murth)—4 a.m.

∴ Total time he lay unconscious = 10 hours appx.

Assuming Appx. time wasted by Hanuman as described in the above paragraph = 1 hour

∴ Net time Hanuman took to go and come back with the mountain and herb = 10-1 = 9 hours appx.

- (3) Since the one side distance between Lanka and Himalyas is 4487 km., hence Hanuman had to cover a total distance of  $4487 \times 2$   
= 8974 km. in the to-and-fro journey

- (4) Calculation of Speed :-  
Important assumptions/factorings—

(i) The battle ended after sun set at 6 p.m. and Laxman revived well past midnight, in the early hours of Braham-Murt roughly at 4 a.m.

(ii) Hanuman wasted a maximum of 1 hour to overcome all obstacles—Kalnemi, uprooting of the mountain, shot down by Bharat and time spent in bringing the doctor Sushen to the spot.

Total distance covered = 8974 km. appx.

Time taken to cover this distance = 9 hours appx.

∴ Speed =  $8974 \div 9 = 997.111$  km/hour or 998 km/hour

Since 1km = 0.6214 miles

∴  $997.111 \text{ km} = 997.111 \times 0.6214 = 619.604$  miles/hour  
or 620 miles/hour

A slight variations in the above parameters must be factored in because they can effect the calculation, but roughly the variation would not be  $\pm 1$  or 2 hours, resulting in the speed varying from as low as 815.818 (or 816) km/hour (or 506 miles/hour) if the time taken is assumed to be 11 hours to as high as 1282 km/hour (or 795 miles/hour) if the time taken was 7 hours. [Note :- The distance of 8974 km. is a Geographical constant].

This above speed is greater than the speed of sound (at 0°C the speed of sound waves is 332 meters/sec., or 1195.2 km/hour !).

Since it is an established tradition that Hanuman could fly faster than wind, it would be logically accepted that the speed of Hanuman was approximately in the

vicinity of 1282 km/hour (or 795 miles/hour). And the time he took to bring the herb from the Himalayas to Lanka was roughly 7 hours.

Sound travels in waves, and requires a medium. Air is the commonest and the usual medium, and wind also consists of air. So, 'Air', 'Wind' and 'Sound' are to be considered synonymous with each other as far as calculating Hanuman's speed is concerned. Since air/wind is the carrier of sound, the former can reasonably be equated to be equivalent to what we call 'sound'.

When speed of Hanuman is calculated in terms of speed of sound, we are in fact considering the speed by which the waves of sound travel in air. This speed may be enhanced or reduced if the air is not static i.e., if the wind blows in the opposite direction to the flight path, it acts as a barrier, a pull, or a drag on the forward thrust of the waves, thereby reducing the speed of sound. The opposite effect would naturally result if the wind is favourable.

Being the son of the Wind God, it is to be expected that the wind was not opposing Hanuman, if not helping him.

Therefore, the speed of Hanuman calculated on the basis of the speed of sound is metaphorically calculating his speed vis-a-vis that of wind. Further, it is assumed that Hanuman 'cruised' in a horizontal flight path and not a parabolic path.

(iii) The "Dronachal mountain" was probably used as a source material for trees and boulders by the monkey army to proceed with the battle. Tulsidas has not mentioned anywhere about its return to the Himalayas by Hanuman. Besides, there was no time to return it, and it was a ready source material for the war which no prudent commander can overlook.

(iv) When Lord Sri Ram returned to Ayodhya by the air route (in the Pushpak air-craft), he probably followed the same path taken by Hanuman upto the point of Ayodhya with a little detour here and there to show Sita the places he had visited after her abduction. These two incidents prove that the science of supersonic flight and air-craft was known at that time. It is also, therefore, possible that Hanuman had a 'strap-on belt' of some kind of rocket or jet which propelled him through the sky. This also explains verse no. 6/54 of Lanka Kand where Hanuman appeared to fly across the sky in a streak of lightening stretching across the night sky from one point on the horizon to the other. A lesser speed than sound would not, in all probabilities, result in this phenomenon. The Dronachal was probably tied to his belly or held aloft his hands very much like the 'Shuttle' aircraft is strapped on the rocket to outer space. And the 'streak' was the exhaust gas escaping from the jet.

(v) It is mentioned in Ram Charit Manas that when Hanuman launched himself to cross the ocean on the way back, the demonesses aborted their embryos. This may have been possible only due to the thunderous sound— called 'Supersonic Boom'—created when Hanuman broke the sound barrier.

To quote Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 28—

"calata mahādhuni garjēsi bhārī. garbha sravahim suni niscara nārī."

Therefore, out of the possible figures calculated above, the one which surpasses the speed of sound seems the most logical, correct and plausible speed which can explain all the possible events.

(5) Time taken by Hanuman to leap across the ocean :-

So, the speed of 1282 km/hour (795 miles/hour) is taken as the flight speed of Hanuman for all practical purposes.

Total breadth of the ocean = 800 miles

Speed of Hanuman = 795 miles/hour

∴ Time taken to cross the ocean

(while going in search of Sita) =  $800 \div 795 = 1.006$  hours

or 1 hour appx.

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# Kavitāvalī Rāmāyaṇ

Of Goswami Tulsidas

(Original Text, Roman Transliteration and  
English Exposition with Elaborate Notes)

## APPENDIX (1.3)

### LIFE SKETCH OF GOSWAMI TULSIDAS

One of the greatest saints, poets, philosophers and blessed souls known to us is Goswami Tulsidas. This saint, born in India in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was a great devotee of Lord Ram, the incarnate Supreme Being. Tulsidas was not an ordinary poet or saint; he was an apostle of the Lord sent especially on this earth to spread the message of love, devotion and faith for the Supreme Being in the form of Sri Ram, a form that the common man could easily relate to and understand. Tulsidas propagated the divine story of Lord Ram and made the Lord's holy Name a household name through his writings, thereby making spiritual liberation and deliverance easily available to the common man, and bringing the Supreme Being nearer to him and his heart than ever before.

His message of having love, devotion, faith and submission for Lord Ram as a way to find eternal liberation and deliverance from the endless cycle of birth and death, as a means of finding freedom from the formidable shackle of miseries and torments that constantly harass a creature in this deluding world in which all the living beings find themselves trapped, and to obtain emancipation and salvation for their souls which would lead to their ultimate and final peace, tranquility and blissful rest, was heartily accepted and welcomed by the masses for its simplicity of approach, and for the freedom that it provided them from elaborate rituals and formalities as ordained in the ancient scriptures which the common man found extremely difficult, impractical and cumbersome to follow.

While the original scriptures were written in the classical language of India, known as Sanskrit, that was limited to the higher and learned classes, therefore making these scriptures beyond the reach of the common man, Tulsidas wrote in the local dialect known as Avadhi, which is a branch of the main language known as Hindi that is spoken throughout the central planes of India. It was the language of the masses, and therefore the writings of Tulsidas became instantly understandable, accessible and dear to the populace.

He wrote about the divine story of Lord Ram in a poetical style that fluently employed the various Raagas (tones, metres and notes) of Indian classical music as well as folk music. This immediately was acceptable by the people as compared to the chanting of the hymns in a staccato manner, or discourses that were dry and boring for

the masses. After a hard day's toil, a common man found rejuvenation and refreshment when he sang a part of Tulsidas' verses rather than hear or read some long-winding discourse telling him about some distant and unknown God.

So we come to the next important contribution of Tulsidas in the field of spiritualism and religion. Through his writings he spread the message that having love, devotion, faith and submission for Lord Ram, who is no one else but incarnate Supreme Being known as Parmeshwar, the Supreme Ishwar, and the Lord God, is the easiest and most convenient method for finding Mukti (liberation and deliverance), Shanti (peace and tranquility), Shukha (happiness and joy) and Anand (bliss).

For achieving this aim the individual needed only to inculcate the habit of constantly remembering the Lord and focusing his mind on him and his holy Name, a method which the scriptures defined as Yoga. While Yoga was complicated, cumbersome, time consuming and aimed at an abstract form of God, the philosophy of Bhakti (love, devotion, dedication for the Supreme Being) as propagated by Tulsidas centered on Lord Ram as the Divinity personified, the Lord whose divine form and mystical deeds were easily documented and readable, making them understandable and within reach of the common man. This methodology brought this same hitherto abstract God extremely near to the common man, and made the God dear to him. The method of story-telling and singing the Lord's glories through melodious verses and hymns instantly struck an emotional and lovable common cord with the individual who now felt that Mukti and spiritual Shanti was not only limited to the high and the mighty as their exclusive prerogative, but he has also the same right over them.

It is obvious that any person can easily relate to an event or a personality which is common to his own experience and knowledge of the world he is acquainted with, rather than some divine Being who is intractable, unknown, invisible and living in a world beyond the wildest of one's imagination. So the net effect was that the Supreme Being was made accessible, approachable and available to the common man by saint Tulsidas through his writings, and the philosophy of Bhakti (devotion, dedication, love, faith, submission, constant remembrance etc.) that they preached.

The books and philosophy of Tulsidas dedicated to having 'Bhakti' for Lord Ram as an infallible remedy for all spiritual and worldly ills and misfortunes have spread like wild-fire amongst the masses, making him more popular than any other single poet or author of the land. This singular fact that the acclaim and respect that Tulsidas has generated down the centuries, which no one else has managed to match, vouches for the greatness of his writings, the deep import of the message of spiritualism and love for the Supreme God that they contain, the correctness and the truthfulness of his approach and preaching, and the especial blessedness of his soul.

There was one more big benefit and reward to humanity from the books of Tulsidas. The society was presented with the noble and ideal character of a king known as 'Ram' whose exemplary life and highly correct conduct set a bench-mark for others to emulate themselves and teach others to follow. It showed man that when the Supreme Being became a human being, he himself had to undergo all the throes of pain and sufferings as well as bouts of joys and happiness that all of them have experienced in their own lives to a lesser or greater degree. But in spite of all these ups and downs of life, Lord Ram maintained the highest level of moral and emotional standards as prescribed by the scriptures. This is therefore possible for them—all members of the society—to do.

After all, there have been hundreds and thousands of great kings, emperors, conquerors and rulers in this world, and all had faithful bards lauding their

achievements in glorious and colourful terms—but all faded away on the sand of time; none of them are called ‘God’. It is only Lord Ram who is eternally remembered as the saviour and the redeemer, so obviously there must be a difference between him and the rest. So by following the path walked by Lord Ram himself as narrated by Tulsidas, the individual man can be sure that he is following the best path that can be followed in his life. In other words, the common man had a practical and handy guide to show him the correct and the righteous way during the course of his routine life and his dealings with this mundane and humdrum world—this is another great contribution of Tulsidas and his writings.

So we see how the Supreme Lord of this creation has used this great apostle and messenger of his, i.e. saint Goswami Tulsidas, to help the creatures of this creation, the subjects of the loving God’s vast realm, come closer to their dear Lord and find their ultimate redemption by the easiest path that can be made available to them in this world of fast-paced life, contradictory and confusing doctrines, lack of proper spiritual guidance, and moral degradation.

The books of Tulsidas are like pitchers full of ambrosia for finding eternal peace of the mind and the heart. Just like fish feels refreshed when submerged in water, the soul of the individual person would feel refreshed and rejuvenated by keeping its self submerged in the nectar of Lord’s love and devotion by way of singing and remembering the divine deeds and stories associated with Lord Ram who is a known and a visible incarnation of the Supreme Being as narrated and sung by the great Tulsidas.

Now, let us read about Goswami Tulsidas’ life and works.

Since great saints and sages did not wish themselves to be praised but preferred that their Lord be praised and worshipped instead, so therefore Tulsidas wrote next to nothing about himself. All accounts of his life are available from contemporary accounts and circumstantial evidences as well as analysis of his writings by modern scholars and researchers. Thus, certain controversies and distractions are bound to exist, but here we shall read the most accepted version of this saint’s life and works.

Goswami Tulsidas was born in the Hindu year Samvat 1589, corresponding to 1532 A.D. His birth place is known as Rajapur (pronounced as *Raajaapur*). This is a small hamlet in the central part of India, and it is located in the district of Banda near the city of Allahabad in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

The day of the birth was the Hindu day of Sraawan Shukla Saptami which corresponds roughly to the seventh day of the bright lunar fortnight in the fifth Hindu month known as Sraawan that falls in late July to mid August.

The time of his birth is believed to be very inauspicious—it was an asterism known as Mula that was on the ascent at that time. This period is called ‘Abhuktamula’, and it is said that a child born under this asterism brings death to its parents.

The child himself was very odd—he was born after full twelve month in the mother’s womb, and at the time of his birth he had the full complement of teeth.

This frightened the parents out of their wits. The only way was to either abandon the child or not look at his face for eight long years.

His parents were extremely poor Brahmins. His father was Atma-ram Dubey, and his mother was Hulsī. [According to some accounts, the surname of his father was ‘Shukla’ instead of ‘Dubey’.] As destined, his mother Hulsī died on the fifth day of

his birth. The father was heart-broken and overcome with superstition. He abandoned the child.

The midwife who had delivered the child was named Muniya. Her mother-in-law was named Chuniya. It was this kind lady who took care of the abandoned child and fed him. As ill fate would have it, Chuniya too died when the child was six years old. His father refused to accept him and so the child was made an orphan!

The mother was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu and used to worship the sacred Tulsi plant regularly. So, the family guru or the family priest called the child 'Tulsi'. This was his first name.

There is another version which says that the family priest of the child was himself known as Tulsidas, and he gave the child the name of 'Tularam' (pronounced as *Tulaaraam*). It was abbreviated to 'Tulsi'.

Anyhow, when the child was forced to fend for himself at the age of six years as outlined above, he went from door to door begging for food, and as his signal call to announce his coming and request the household to give him alms he used to say aloud 'Ram'. So the people began to call him 'Ram-bola'—literally meaning someone who says or calls out Ram.

The Supreme Lord of the world has his own mysterious ways, and when he selects someone to fulfill his divine mandate and become his apostle, the Lord takes full charge of his life. All great souls are born like ordinary human beings—no one drops from air like rain—and it is what they do later on in life, what they give to the society, what mankind learns from them and how it benefits from their teachings, their message and their legacy is what that really matters, and it is what that makes them stand out as a colossus and a tall landmark on the landscape of humanity.

And so it happened that a saint named Narhari-das, a descendant of the great seer and sage named Ramanand, had a vision (dream) that he must pick up a helpless child who was orphaned and abandoned by the world, and instruct him about the divine story of Lord Ram. Narhari-das spotted the poor boy and took him under his wings, developing a special affinity with him because of the divine order.

Narhari-das took the boy called Ram-bola to Ayodhya and performed his sacred thread ceremony. It was on this occasion that Ram-bola was rechristened as 'Tulsi-ram'. The two—Narhari-das and Tulsiram—lived for about ten months at Ayodhya, the birth place of Lord Ram and the capital of his kingdom during the Lord's sojourn on earth. Even during this short stay, the boy was completely enthralled by the immortal story of the Lord which he used to hear in rapt attention at a number of places where it was traditionally said and repeated in this holy town. The hidden spark of divinity and holiness as well as the fire of love for his beloved Lord Ram that lay hidden in his bosom and concealed in his heart got its first puff of rejuvenation here, and this hitherto concealed fire was later on to become a raging all-engulfing fire of total submission for his beloved Lord Ram, a fire of unquestioned and undiluted love and devotion as well as the unstoppable longing for attaining Lord Ram that not only overtook the entire being of Tulsidas alone but it also swept across the length and breadth of the land.

Narhari-das took Tulsiram to a place called 'Sukar-kshetra' that is near Ayodhya at the confluence of the rivers Saryu and Ghagra. Here they lived for the next five years.

Another learned man named Shesha Sanaatan came visiting, and he took Tulsiram with him to Varanasi, a holy city traditionally held as the center of learning and education in the classics and languages from ancient times. It was here that Tulsiram was re-named 'Tulsidas' by his new guru Sanaatan.

At Varanasi Tulsidas learnt Sanskrit language and its grammar. He was introduced to literature devoted to the theme closest to his heart—the theme of Lord Ram. He read the versions of the Lord’s story as narrated by sages Valmiki and Veda Vyas, as well as the various Purans and other ancient texts. Tulsidas literally gulped down these texts like a hungry man partaking of delicious food for the first time in his life. He was extremely bright and mastered the finer nuances of the language and the ancient texts.

Gradually his name and fame spread as an eligible bachelor who was an expert teacher and a scholar par-excellence. He used to teach and preach the Purans and the versions of the Ramayana, and earned his livelihood as well as renown. A Brahmin family of the Bharadwaj lineage lived in a village known as Taarpita which was across the river Yamuna from Tulsidas’ ancestral village of Rajapur. The head of the family was a Brahmin named Deen Bandhu Paathak. He had a beautiful daughter named Ratnawali (Ratnaawali). When he heard about the great name and fame of Tulsidas he married his daughter Ratnawali to him.

Tulsidas and Rathawali had a son named ‘Tarapati’ (*Taaraapati*). But unfortunately the child died early in infancy. Besides this single tragedy, Tulsidas’ married life was otherwise happily spent for fifteen years. Tulsidas loved his wife passionately and he could not think of ever living without her even for a day.

Now let us see how the remarkable change came into his life—a change that turned this scholarly household man who used to spend his days like an ordinary scholarly person giving discourses and preaching the scriptures and earning his livelihood into a legend even during his lifetime, someone who left us a legacy of Bhakti and Mukti that are easily accessible, as well as a rich heritage of devotional literature of exceptional beauty and charm like the world has never seen before.

There are two versions of the incident that was the turning point in his life, and which made this hitherto passionate man renounce the world completely along with all its attractions, and instead devote the rest of his life in total submission to his beloved Lord Ram, a life of total submersion in the ocean of love and devotion for Lord Ram who was the beloved of his soul.

The first version is as follows. It happened that once his brother-in-law came visiting the household of Tulsidas. Tulsidas had to go out on some assignment to preach the Purans for eleven days. So his wife Ratnawali took his permission and went with her brother to her parent’s home, promising to come back before Tulsidas returns. But when he came back from his assignment he found that she hadn’t come. So enamoured was Tulsidas with his wife that he could not wait for her arrival, and he set out forthwith to his in-law’s place. It was night and the river Yamuna was in spate, but Tulsidas didn’t have patience left in him. So he caught hold of a floating corpse and crossed over to the other side. When he reached his in-law’s place, he got due respect, but Ratnawali was shocked and dismayed at his behaviour; she felt embarrassed at his conduct and thought that people in her village would start passing lurid and lascivious comments when they come to hear the developments the next morning. Besides this, she wished good for her husband’s spiritual welfare because she was no ordinary woman. She thought to her self that her husband had been teaching and preaching the scriptures for so long a time but had not understood any tiny bit of their meaning. So she scolded him when they were alone. The essence of what she said is this—‘Look. The amount of love and passion that you have for me and my body made of bones and flesh, how wonderful would it have been if you had even half of it for Lord Ram whom you preach about, who has taken care of you when no one else bothered, and who fills your stomach even now.’



Tulsidas' eyes of wisdom opened instantly. He got up and retraced his steps immediately. Ratnawali was again shocked. She did not mean that her husband would abandon her. Her scolding was supposed to be a normal tiff between a wife and a husband, and was nothing as serious as it turned out to be.

Anyway, Tulsidas turned away from this humdrum life once and for all. Broken and devastated, Ratnawali lived thereafter like a hermitress, spending some time in her maternal village and sometime in the village of her brother-in-law named Nanda-das. It is believed that she composed 201 Dohas, two-line verses having devotional and spiritual tone. She died in Samvat 1651 (A.D. 1594).

According to the other version, when Tulsidas reached his in-law's house, all were asleep. He caught hold a serpent to climb the boundary wall, thinking the serpent to be a rope, and called out the people inside to open the gates. All woke up, but Ratnawali was extremely peeved and she scolded Tulsidas in the manner described above.

Moving out for ever, Tulsidas went on a pilgrimage to all the sacred places, and finally settled down in Varanasi. He was already well-known here as a scholar and a great devotee of the Lord. Tulsidas began spending his time preaching the texts of the Sanskrit versions of the Ramayana but thought to himself that he better write the divine story of Lord Ram in the local dialect for the benefit of the masses. Again, he decided that it was the best form of meditation and contemplation for him which will have a two-pronged benefit—one was that his days and time would be spent constructively in remaining submerged in the thoughts of his beloved Lord Ram, and second he would leave behind a legacy that would generate devotion, dedication and love for the Lord in the heart of the coming generations down the ages. He realised that the story of Lord Ram was till that time in Sanskrit, a language of the scholars and not of the common man, so there was the great need of speaking and writing in the common man's language so that the Lord's story became easily readable and understandable by him. Thus, by his writings Tulsidas brought Lord Ram and his divine name closer home and nearer to every ordinary household, every single individual on the land.

It is said that the local people of Varanasi recognized his scholarship and he was made an Abbott of a monastery, known as a Mattha. It was this appointment that bestowed the title 'Goswami' upon him because it is a title of honour. The word also means someone who has learnt to exercise control over the sense organs. This Mattha came to be known as the 'Tulsidas Mattha', but by Samvat 1848 (A.D. 1791) it was renamed as 'Sthaan Tulsidas'.

Tulsidas wrote for approximately 50-60 years of his life. Amongst his contemporary poets and saints with whom he came in contact are the following—Surdas, Nanda-das, Mirabai and Keshav-das. It is also known that a Muslim chieftain named Abdur-rahim Khaan-khaana, who was a governor and administrator of Varanasi, and a rich Hindu landlord named Todarmal were greatly influenced by Tulsidas and had great respect for him.

There is a popular legend associated with Tulsidas. We shall cite some of the well known ones here.

There was a criminal who would call out 'in the name of Ram, give alms to this murderer'. Tulsidas was so delighted and overwhelmed when he would hear the name of this beloved Ram being called out that he would take this criminal to his austere place and share whatever food he had with him. This of course led to great scorn and anger amongst the orthodox Brahmins who demanded an explanation from Tulsidas. He told them that once this man has said 'Ram' all his sins were wiped

away. Infuriated further, the Brahmins said that if he had this much faith in the Lord and if what he said is the truth then he must prove it. The test was that if the stone bull placed in a Shiva temple would eat from the hands of the criminal it would be proved that what Tulsidas said was correct, otherwise they would castrate him from the society. On the designated day, to the wonder of all assembled to watch the spectacle, the stone bull actually ate from the hands of the criminal!

This made his tormentors more jealous of him. They hired a professional thief and told him to enter his house in the night and steal his manuscripts. When the thief came in he found Tulsidas sleeping blissfully but two young boys, with bow and arrow in hand, were guarding his house. They were Lord Ram and Laxman themselves. The thief beat a hasty retreat out of fear for his life, and then become Tulsidas' great admirer.

The continued harassment of Tulsidas made him appeal to Lord Hanuman, the most beloved devotee of Lord Ram and himself a manifestation of Lord Shiva, to help him. Hanuman asked Tulsidas in a dream to write a prayerful petition to Lord Ram seeking the Lord's intervention. It is believed that these prayers turned out to be the text of the book 'Vinai Patrika' that Tulsidas wrote.

There is another fascinating legend related to his life. It says that everyday after his morning ablutions Tulsidas would pour some water at the base of the holy banyan tree. A spirit that lived on that tree and suffered due to some mistakes of the past evil deeds was able to quench its thirst and heard the divine name of Ram which Tulsidas would utter while pouring water. The spirit was absolved of its sins and found liberation. So it blessed Tulsidas and told him that he can have a wish fulfilled. Tulsidas wanted a Darshan (holy sight) of his beloved Ram, and so he asked for this boon. The spirit told him that an old beggar-like man attends his discourses everyday; he comes first, sits at the back of the congregation, and is the last to leave. He would help Tulsidas to meet Ram. Next day, Tulsidas found him out and caught hold of his legs—beseeching him to make him see Ram. This old man was no one else but Lord Hanuman in disguise.

He advised Tulsidas that he should go to Chitrakoot, a place amongst the mountains where Lord Ram had spent the earlier part of his forest exile, and there he will have a Darshan of the Lord. Tulsidas went to Chitrakoot and made it his habit to first take a bath in the river there and then prepare a paste of sandalwood that he would apply to his own forehead and to those devotees who came to take a bath in the river, saying the name of Ram each time. Shortly after his coming, one day Lord Ram appeared before him and asked him to give some sandalwood paste and apply it on the Lord's forehead. Not only this, the Lord applied the paste to Tulsidas' forehead with his own hands. What more would Tulsidas want! He got the fruit of his life. He became ecstatic and immediately went into a trance-like state of extreme bliss known as Samadhi that is said to have lasted for the next three days.

There is a verse commemorating this event. It is as follows—

*चित्रकूट के घाट पर भई संतन की भीड़ ।*

*तुलसीदास चंदन घिसें तिलक देत रघुवीर ॥*

It means 'On the banks of a river in Chitrakoot, there is a crowd of saints and holy people. Tulsidas is rubbing sandalwood to make a paste, and Raghubir (Lord Ram) uses this paste to make the mark of the Tilak on their foreheads.' [The Tilak is a sign consisting of three parallel horizontal lines that are made on the forehead of devotees of Lord Vishnu using paste of sandalwood.]

Once he had gone to Vrindavan to visit the holy sites associated with Lord Krishna. In the main temple there he addressed the presiding deity and sang that he would bow his head only if the Lord holds a bow and arrow (like Lord Ram). It is said that immediately, to the amazement of all present, the idol of Lord Krishna was seen holding a bow and arrow. Tulsidas fell down like a rod to pay his obeisance to his beloved Lord Ram who had revealed there and then on the altar. There is a subtle message in this incident—that all forms of the Lord are the same, whether it is the form known as Lord Krishna or the form known as Lord Ram. What one needs to see his beloved Lord everywhere in this creation is love, devotion, dedication, conviction, faith and sincerity that are deep and truthful—if these qualities are there, the Lord is also there.

There is one more episode of historical authenticity that is worth recounting here. It is believed that the Mughal Emperor Jahangir had heard of the mystical powers of Tulsidas. When he met Tulsidas once, he asked him to show some miracle. Tulsidas refused, saying that he knew no black magic, and the only thing he knew was the name of ‘Ram’. This obviously angered the emperor, who was not accustomed to such blunt replies, so he ordered that Tulsidas be imprisoned. ‘Let me see how your Ram saves you now,’ rebuked Jahangir. It is believed that a fierce bunch of monkeys attacked the fort and the prison, wreaking havoc all around. Jahangir realised that Tulsidas was not an ordinary man, and he relented. He not only released Tulsidas from prison but gave him gifts in the form of gold and silver coins. It is a belief that Tulsidas used that money to build Hanuman’s temple at Varanasi with moulded the Lord’s image his own hands.

Tulsidas left his mortal coil (body) in Varanasi on the banks of the holy river Ganges at the Assi Ghat. The day was Sraavan Shukla Saptami of Samvat 1680 (A.D. 1623). According to another account, the day was Sraavan Badi Teej, and this day is regarded as more authentic because it is followed as the death anniversary of Tulsidas by the descendants of Todarmal who regard Tulsidas as their Guru. [Shukla Saptami is the seventh day of the bright half of the lunar month, while Badi Teej is the third day of the dark half. Sraawan is the fifth Hindu month falling roughly between end of July and mid of August.]

Tulsidas was exceptional and unique because he was an enlightened soul especially empowered by the Holy Spirit of the Lord himself to spread the message of love and devotion for the Lord as a means of attaining spiritual purity, peace and bliss alongside the opportunity of attaining emancipation and salvation for the individual’s soul, known as the Atma. Tulsidas adopted the simplified method of remembering the Lord through the medium of the Lord’s deeds in this world. This helped Tulsidas to ever remain submerged in the thoughts of Lord Ram, and to keep his mind focused on the Divinity and away from this deluding world and its entangling spiritual mess. This is what the essence of Yoga is—to remain focused on the ‘Truth’ and exclude all that is the ‘untruth’.

This was a form of meditation and contemplation for Tulsidas; it helped him to divert his mind from the affairs of the mundane world around him and focus it instead on the Divine Being who lived in this external world as Lord Ram and as the Atma, the pure conscious soul, in his inner self. This is also the focus of Yoga, the established and scripturally sanctified way of establishing a union between the individual’s soul known as the Atma, and the Supreme Soul of this creation known as the Parmatma. A profound resonance is created when the vibrations of the individual

soul begin to correspond with the cosmic vibrations generated by the Supreme Soul, and this leads to what the scriptures recognize as the state of bliss and Samadhi, the state of perpetual ecstasy and bliss.

The reason for his continuously writing so many versions of the same story of Lord Ram in so many different ways—e.g. Ram Charit Manas, Kavitawali, Geetawali, Barvai Ramayan, Vinai Patrika, Dohawali—is that he used this method as a means of meditation on the Supreme Being in his visible form as Lord Ram, and repeating the Lord's holy name as much as possible by continuously writing on this theme as a means of contemplation and fixing his mind on the Divinity instead of anything related to the physical world of material objects. This was a profound form of Yoga for him as it helped him to establish a communion of his soul with the Supreme Soul represented by Lord Ram.

This is what Tulsidas subtly taught us—to become eternally blissful by remaining engrossed in the thoughts of the Divinity that is bliss personified, and enjoy the happiness that comes with the realisation that the Supreme Lord, our protector and redeemer, is not only always with us but also exceptionally easy to access without any hassle and formality. And the tool for this achievement is to keep the Lord eternally in our mind and heart by keeping them submerged in his thoughts. This is easily done by reading, hearing, telling and discussing about the Lord's divine story in all its myriad variations and colourful versions.

In order to achieve this end, Tulsidas wrote prolifically on the theme of Lord Ram as an incarnation of Divinity, as the Supreme Being living himself in our midst in the form of Lord Ram's holy story!

One great benefit of this approach was that his entire life and time was spent in the form of one huge Yoga, done continuously and unbroken. He did not remain satisfied by writing one book, say the Ram Charit Manas, but wrote three other books to narrate the same story—these are the Kavitawali and the Geetawali. These two books supplemented and complimented the epic story which was narrated in the Ram Charit Manas. There were certain events in the epic life of Lord Ram that the great soul Tulsidas wished to add more colour and vibrancy to, so he decided to mould them in the form of music and song. A song that is sung melodiously is more heart warming and heart touching than mere narration of events no matter how beautifully they have been narrated. So he wrote the Kavitawali and the Geetawali—both these narrate the same story of Lord Ram's life and deeds but in a pattern that is set to different 'Raagas' which are musical notes, metres and tones of classical Indian music. It is practically observed in our day to day life that one can easily recall some song, sing it comfortably and hum its musical tune more easily as compared to reciting some regular text of a classical book.

The books of Tulsidas—As has been noted above, Tulsidas spent his life preaching, teaching and writing about his beloved Lord Ram. The following books are universally regarded as being written by him. The list is according to the year and period of his life when he wrote them.

1. Vairaagya Sandipani—it was written roughly between Samvat 1626 and 1627 (A.D. 1569-70).
2. Ram-agya-prashna—it was written roughly between Samvat 1627 and 1628 (A.D. 1570-71).
3. Ram-lalaa Nahachhu—it was written roughly between Samvat 1628 and 1629 (A.D. 1571-72).

4. Janki Mangal—it was written roughly between Samvat 1629 and 1630 (A.D. 1572-73).
5. Ram Charit Manas—the writing of this great epic was started in Samvat 1631 (A.D. 1574)---but the date of conclusion is not determined.
6. Parvati Mangal—again, it was started in Samvat 1643 (A.D. 1586)---the date of conclusion is not determined.
7. Geetawali (Ram Geetawali)—it was written roughly between Samvat 1630 and 1670 (A.D. 1573-1613).
8. Vinai Patrika—it was written roughly between Samvat 1631 and 1679 (A.D. 1574-1622).
9. Dohawali—it was written roughly between Samvat 1626 and 1680 (A.D. 1569-1623).
10. Varvai Ramayan—it was written roughly between Samvat 1630 and 1680 (A.D. 1573-1623).
11. Kavitali—it was written roughly between Samvat 1631 and 1680 (A.D. 1574-1623).
12. Hanuman Baahuk—it was written roughly between Samvat 1631 and 1680 (A.D. 1574-1623).
13. Krishna Geetawali—it was written roughly between Samvat 1643 and 1660 (A.D. 1586-1603).

Now, let us very briefly glance at what these thirteen books are about. Tulsidas' magnum opus is unquestionably the Ram Charit Manas. It is the most revered and sacred text, known universally as the Ramayana, which is the narrative of the divine story of the life and times of Lord Ram who was the incarnate Supreme Being on earth. It is universally regarded as the bench-mark for the narrative of the holy story of Lord Ram.

The Geetawali and Kavitali are variations of the Ramayana as they also describe the divine story of Lord Ram but use the different Raagas (notes, metres and tones) of classical music of India to narrate the different events in Lord Ram's life.

The Barvai Ramayan is also another such book which narrates the story of Lord Ram, but it is shorter than the above two books. It uses two-line verses called Barvai Chand instead of the Raagas.

The Dohawali is a compilation of two-line couplets dealing with a host of topics covering ethics, morality, proper ways of conduct and behaviour, matters concerning society and politics, daily problems of life and how to cope with them, and of course the theme of having reliance on the Supreme Being in the form of Lord Ram for being assured of all-round wellbeing and welfare.

The Vairagya Sandipani is a short work like the Barvai Ramayan, and it highlights the characters and virtuousness of those who have renounced all attractions of the material world and have completely surrendered themselves to Lord Ram, thereby developing the virtues that make a man a true saint and holy.

The Janki Mangal and Parvati Mangal are two books that describe the marriage of Lord Ram with Sita and Lord Shiva with Parvati in a poetic style laced with devotion and affection for the respective Lord. The verses of these two books were traditionally recited during marriage ceremonies in Indian homes as auspicious charms that brought happiness and wellbeing to the newly wed couples.

In this genre falls the other short book called Ram Lalaa Nachu. It pertains to a ceremony that is part of the overall marriage rituals in Indian homes. During this, the head and the beard of the groom are shaved and his nails cut before the actual

marriage begins. It is usually done just before the marriage party starts for the venue of the marriage rituals. The book describes this ceremony for Lord Ram prior to his marriage with Sita. It is meant to complement Janki Mangal.

The Hanuman Baahuk was written by Tulsidas towards the end of his life when he suffered from severe attack of pain in his arms ('Baahu'). He prays to Lord Hanuman to relieve him of this agony. It is believed that Tulsidas was cured of this disease after he prayed to Hanuman using the hymns of this book.

And finally we have the Krishna Geetawali. It so happened that another great saint named Surdas, who was his contemporary, had a friendly exchange with Tulsidas, saying that he did not know that Ram and Krishna were the same Divinity in two forms. Surdas was perhaps referring to incident when Tulsidas didn't bow before the image of Lord Krishna when he visited Vrindavan till the Lord held a bow and an arrow.

To prove that it was not so, that he only loved the image of the Lord with the bow and arrow though he knew that there is no difference between Ram and Krishna, Tulsidas wrote Krishna Geetawali that describes the holy story of Lord Krishna. Not to be outdone, Surdas did the same in the reverse order—that is, though he was an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna, he wrote a book titled 'Ram Charitawali' that describes the story of Lord Ram just like Tulsidas' Krishna Charitawali that describes the story of Lord Krishna.

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## About the Author

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia left home when he was approximately 29 years of age due to an inner call of his heart that told him to devote his life in the service of his beloved Lord God, Sri Ram. Worldly attractions did not enchant him at all. So, he didn't marry, and after his father's death he came and settled permanently in Ayodhya, the holy town in India associated with Lord Ram.

Presently he works as an honorary manager of a world famous Kanak Bhavan Temple at Ayodhya, and spends his time writing in English so that the world can access the wonderful nectar of metaphysical, spiritual and devotional philosophy that is contained in Indian scriptures for which they are so renowned.

His English Books published separately by a reputed publisher of India, the details of whom can be had by contacting the author on his email given below, include: (i) The series on '108 Upanishads' in five volumes having eighteen parts, (ii) Veda Vyas' 'Adhyatma Ramayan' in two parts, (iii) 'Devi Puran Ramayan', (iv) Valmiki's 'Adbhut Ramayan', and (v) 'Biography of Lord Ram' based on Tulsidas' books.

Genre of Writing: Spiritualism, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Religious, Devotional and Theological.

The author's Books are available for order online both in 'e-book' format and 'paper-back book' format at following websites—

- (a) [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (in their 'kindle' + 'paper-back book' versions),
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- (c) [www.draft2digital.com](http://www.draft2digital.com) (in 'e-book' version) through the following platforms: (i) Apple (ibooks), (ii) Barnes & Noble (nook), (iii) Kobo, (iv) Page Foundry, (v) Scribd, (vi) Tolino etc.:-

(A) List of Books that are currently available as mentioned above :-

(A-1) (1) The Chariot of God: Dharma Rath; (2) OM and Naad; (3) YOGA—Its Practice and Philosophy according to the Upanishads; (4) Ram Geeta; (5) The Revelation of Creation—as envisioned in the Upanishads; (6) The Pentagon of Creation: As Expounded in the Upanishads; (7) The Triumvirate of Creation; (8) Maya: The Whirlpool of Delusions in Creation; (9) Surdas-Ram Charitawali; (10-a) The legend of Lord Shiva: Book 1 'Lord Shiva's marriage with Parvati'; (10-b) Book 2 'Lord Shiva's Sacred Hymns'; (10-c) Book 3 'Shiva's different names & their significance, Shiva Puran, Upanishads'; (11) the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads; (13) Lord Ram's marriage with Sita (based on Tulsidas' books "Ram Charit Manas", "Janki Mangal", "Ram Lala Nahachu" & "Geetawali", and sage Veda Vyas' book "Adhyatma Ramayan"; (14) "Anthology of Sacred Hymns, Stotras & Mantras of Lord Ram"; (15) "Vairagya Shatkam" of king-sage Bhartrihari; (16) An Anthology of the Sanyas Upanishads-Parts 1 and 2; (17) "Kaag-Bhusund Ramayan" or the "Aadi Ramayan" based on Tulsidas' Ram Charit Manas; (18) The Legendary Glory of Hanuman; (19) "Narad Bhakti Sutra"—Aphorisms for Devotion for God and the Principles of Love for the Lord; (20) "Shandilya Bhakti Sutra"—Aphorisms for

Devotion for God and the Principles of Love for the Lord according to the illustrious sage Shandilya; (21) “Bhakti Sutra Mala”—A Garland of Spiritual Wisdom in the form of an Anthology of Aphorisms pertaining to Bhakti or devotion, love and affection for Lord God; (22) Glory of Lord Ram’s Holy Name, Sacred Mantras, Stotras & Hymns; (23) Saints and Non-Saints: Their Distinguishing Characters and Qualities; (24) A True Guru (Qualities, Importance and Need of a True Teacher, Preceptor, Guide and Advisor); (25) “Sundar Kand” of Ram Charit Manas; (26) The Story of Ravana and the Epic War of Lanka—Told in Slow Motion (based on, and will have the full relevant Text of, Ram Charit Manas, Adhyatma Ramayan, Anand Ramayan, Geetawali Ramayan, and Kavitalawali Ramayan); (27) The Great Ancient Sages, Seers, Saints and Enlightened Kings of India; (28) The Metaphor of the Hansa in the Upanishads: The symbolism of a Grand Swan used to explain the wisdom of spiritual and metaphysical principles by the Upanishads.

(A-2) Goswami Tulsidas Series: (1) Book 1- ‘Dohawali’; (2) Book 2- ‘Parvati Mangal’; (3) Book 3- ‘Kavitalawali’; (4) Book 4- ‘Janki Mangal’; (5) Book 5- ‘Ram Lala Nahachu’; (6) Book 6- ‘Geetawali Ramayan’; (7) Book 7- ‘Vairagya Sandipani’; (8) Book 8- ‘Vinai Patrika’; (9) ‘Barvai Ramayan’.

(B) The following Books have been published in ‘Printed-Book Deluxe Editions’ by a reputed Indian Publisher (details given below) :

1. Detailed English renderings, with explanatory notes and commentaries of the 108 Upanishads classified according to the Vedic tradition = 6 volumes; 18 parts. [Vol. 1=Rig Veda Upanishads; Vol. 2= Sam Veda Upanishads; Vol. 3= Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads; Vol. 4= Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads; Vol. 5= Atharva Veda Upanishads; Vol. 6= Vedanta Concepts explained with specific references to the relevant Upanishads.]

2. English rendering of Adbhut Ramayan by sage Valmiki.
3. English rendering of Adhyatma Ramayan by sage Veda Vyas.
4. English rendering of Devi Puran’s Ramayan by sage Veda Vyas.
5. A Divine Biography of Lord Ram & Glory of Lord’s Holy Name.

Name and contact of Publisher of above Printed Books listed under (C):

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(C) Book under preparation:

A full-blown English rendering of Tulsidas’ epic ‘Ram Charit Manas’ is under preparation. It will be a unique Book and an elaborate one, as it would run into many thousands of pages that would endeavour to explain each single verse of Ram Charit Manas in detail from different perspectives, with the aid of explanatory notes and references.

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